

The Influence of Workload and Work Stress on Employee Performance with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable: A Study at Tapin Utara Community Health Center, Tapin Regency, South Kalimantan

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Employee performance is a central issue in primary healthcare organizations because the quality, speed, and consistency of public service depend heavily on the capacity of employees to complete clinical, administrative, and community-based tasks. This study examines the influence of workload and work stress on employee performance with job satisfaction as an intervening variable at Tapin Utara Community Health Center, Tapin Regency, South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. The study employed a quantitative explanatory design using a structured questionnaire distributed to employees of the health center. The research model positioned workload and work stress as exogenous variables, job satisfaction as an intervening variable, and employee performance as the endogenous variable. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS. The findings show that workload and work stress have positive and significant effects on employee performance. Workload and work stress also have positive and significant effects on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has the strongest positive and significant effect on employee performance and mediates the relationships between workload, work stress, and employee performance. The adjusted R-square value of 0.880 indicates that 88% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by workload, work stress, and job satisfaction. These findings imply that workload and work stress should not only be understood as risk factors but also as managerial conditions that, when kept proportional, meaningful, and manageable, may strengthen job satisfaction and improve performance in public healthcare institutions.

Keywords: workload; work stress; job satisfaction; employee performance; intervening variable; community health center

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1. Introduction

Community health centers are strategic institutions in the Indonesian public health system. They serve as the first point of contact between the community and formal health services, and they carry out a wide range of functions that include promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative activities. In this context, the performance of employees is not merely an internal organizational matter; it is directly connected to the continuity and quality of healthcare services received by the public. When employees perform well, services are delivered more accurately, programs are implemented more consistently, and the public receives better support in maintaining health and preventing disease.

Tapin Utara Community Health Center operates in a dynamic service environment. Employees are expected to provide direct patient care, conduct community health promotion, implement public health programs, prepare reports, respond to administrative demands, and adapt to changes in health service standards. These demands create a work environment in which employees must combine technical knowledge, discipline, communication skills, and emotional resilience. The preliminary description in the source thesis

indicates that several performance-related problems were observed, including incomplete understanding of service procedures, limitations in supporting facilities, and work completion that sometimes extends beyond established service hours.

One of the most important factors related to employee performance is workload. Workload refers to the amount, intensity, and complexity of tasks that must be completed within a certain period. In healthcare organizations, workload may arise from patient visits, program targets, administrative reporting, interprofessional coordination, and emergency responses. Workload can be constructive when it is proportional to employee capacity and supported by sufficient resources. However, workload may become harmful when it exceeds employee ability, is distributed unfairly, or is not accompanied by adequate organizational support (Rohman & Ichsan, 2021; Fransiska & Tupti, 2020).

Work stress is another key factor in understanding employee performance. Stress appears when employees perceive that job demands are difficult, urgent, or exceed their coping capacity. In public health centers, work stress may emerge from time pressure, patient expectations, limited facilities, administrative accountability, overlapping duties, and the emotional burden of dealing with health problems in the community. Although stress is often associated with negative outcomes, not all stress reduces performance. A moderate and manageable level of pressure can stimulate alertness, responsibility, and achievement orientation. This constructive form of stress is often conceptualized as eustress (Cooper & Quick, 2017; Luthans, 2006; Rizal & Sari, 2020).

Job satisfaction is also essential in explaining why employees perform well or poorly. Employees who are satisfied with their work tend to show higher motivation, stronger commitment, and greater willingness to complete tasks responsibly. Job satisfaction reflects how employees evaluate their work conditions, relationships with colleagues, recognition, role clarity, compensation, supervision, and opportunities for development. In a healthcare organization, job satisfaction becomes particularly important because service quality is strongly influenced by employee attitudes and emotional states (Afandi, 2021; Hasibuan, 2019; Sutrisno, 2020).

The relationship among workload, work stress, job satisfaction, and employee performance is complex. Excessive workload and uncontrolled stress may reduce satisfaction and performance. Conversely, meaningful work demands, fair task allocation, supportive leadership, and manageable pressure may enhance satisfaction and performance. Therefore, it is not enough to examine only the direct effects of workload and work stress on performance. It is also necessary to understand whether job satisfaction mediates these relationships. By positioning job satisfaction as an intervening variable, this study seeks to explain the mechanism through which workload and work stress affect employee performance.

The empirical context of this study is Tapin Utara Community Health Center in Tapin Regency, South Kalimantan Province. The health center experienced fluctuations in service visits from 2020 to 2024, while the number of employees gradually increased. Patient visits were recorded at 67,784 in 2020, rose to 107,987 in 2021, decreased to 93,786 in 2022, reached 82,864 in 2023, and were recorded at 82,837 in 2024. During the same period, the number of employees increased from 53 in 2020 to 76 in 2024. These data indicate that the institution has attempted to increase service capacity, but the complexity of service delivery still requires careful human resource management.

This study is important for at least three reasons. First, primary healthcare institutions need evidence-based human resource strategies to maintain service quality. Second, the study contributes to the literature by examining job satisfaction as an intervening variable in the relationship between workload, work stress, and employee performance. Third, the findings provide practical implications for managers of community

health centers, particularly in designing workload distribution, stress management, employee support, and performance improvement strategies.

Based on the background above, the objective of this study is to analyze the direct effects of workload and work stress on employee performance, the direct effects of workload and work stress on job satisfaction, the direct effect of job satisfaction on employee performance, and the intervening role of job satisfaction in the relationships between workload, work stress, and employee performance at Tapin Utara Community Health Center.

Table 1. Number of Visits and Employees at Tapin Utara Community Health Center, 2020-2024

Year	Number of Visits	Number of Employees
2020	67,784	53
2021	107,987	55
2022	93,786	61
2023	82,864	72
2024	82,837	76

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the level of achievement shown by employees in carrying out tasks and responsibilities assigned by the organization. Performance can be reflected in the quality of work, quantity of work, timeliness, responsibility, cooperation, initiative, and ability to meet organizational standards. In the context of a community health center, performance is visible in the accuracy of service, compliance with procedures, responsiveness to patient needs, completion of administrative reports, and commitment to public health programs (Wibowo, 2017; Mangkunegara, 2017; Sinaga, 2020).

Performance in healthcare institutions is multidimensional. It includes technical dimensions, such as the ability to follow clinical and administrative procedures, and behavioral dimensions, such as discipline, empathy, communication, and collaboration. Employees who understand job procedures and have sufficient resources are more likely to complete tasks effectively. Conversely, inadequate competence, unclear work procedures, and limited infrastructure may weaken performance even when employees have strong motivation.

The source thesis identifies several indicators of employee performance at Tapin Utara Community Health Center, including knowledge of the job, methods used in carrying out the job, ability to complete assigned tasks, and time used to complete work. These indicators are relevant to public service organizations because employee performance must be assessed not only from output but also from process quality and service reliability.

Workload

Workload refers to the number of tasks, duties, responsibilities, and work demands that must be completed by an employee or organizational unit within a specific period. Workload can be physical, mental, emotional, or administrative. In healthcare settings, workload is often influenced by the number of patients, complexity of cases, reporting requirements, program targets, and the availability of health personnel and facilities (Koesomowidjojo, 2017; Mahawati et al., 2021; Rohman & Ichsan, 2021).

The relationship between workload and performance is not always linear. Excessive workload can cause fatigue, emotional exhaustion, mistakes, and low productivity. Nevertheless, an appropriate workload may create a sense of responsibility and achievement. Employees may feel that their contribution is meaningful

when they are given tasks that match their competence and professional role. Therefore, workload becomes a managerial factor that must be balanced carefully.

At Tapin Utara Community Health Center, workload is shaped by patient services, health promotion activities, school health checks, nutrition programs, eye health screening, color blindness checks, hearing examinations, and administrative reporting. These responsibilities indicate that employees must handle both direct and indirect service activities. The increase in the number of employees from 2020 to 2024 may help distribute workload more evenly, but it does not eliminate the need for continuous workload assessment.

Work Stress

Work stress is a psychological, emotional, and physical response to job demands that are perceived as challenging, excessive, unclear, or difficult to control. Stress may arise when there is a mismatch between demands and employee capacity. It may also emerge from time pressure, role ambiguity, interpersonal conflict, organizational change, lack of resources, or responsibility for critical services (Cooper & Quick, 2017; Asih et al., 2018; Mangkunegara, 2013).

In the public healthcare context, work stress can be intensified by the need to provide continuous service, respond to community expectations, maintain accuracy, and comply with administrative standards. Employees may experience pressure when they must complete several tasks within limited time or when they are required to master new procedures without sufficient support. This type of stress can reduce performance when it becomes chronic and unmanaged.

However, stress can also function as a positive challenge. Challenge stressors may encourage employees to focus, learn, and improve. When employees believe that job pressure is manageable and related to meaningful organizational goals, stress may increase motivation rather than reduce it. This perspective is relevant to the findings of this study, which show a positive and significant relationship between work stress and employee performance.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to employees' affective and evaluative responses toward their work. It reflects whether employees feel comfortable, valued, fairly treated, and motivated in their work environment. Job satisfaction may be influenced by workload, supervision, compensation, recognition, facilities, organizational support, career opportunities, and relationships with colleagues (Handoko, 2020; Afandi, 2021; Sutrisno, 2020).

Employees with high job satisfaction tend to show stronger commitment and better work behavior. They are more willing to complete tasks, support organizational goals, and maintain service quality. In a health center, satisfaction is particularly important because employees interact directly with patients and communities. Dissatisfied employees may become less responsive, less cooperative, and less motivated to provide excellent service.

Job satisfaction is used as an intervening variable in this study because it may explain how workload and work stress affect employee performance. If workload and stress are managed properly, employees may feel challenged, trusted, and useful, which increases satisfaction and ultimately improves performance. If they are not managed properly, they may reduce satisfaction and harm performance.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The conceptual framework of this study assumes that workload and work stress influence employee performance both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. Workload and work stress are positioned

as independent variables because they represent work conditions experienced by employees. Job satisfaction is positioned as an intervening variable because it represents employees' evaluative response to their work conditions. Employee performance is positioned as the dependent variable because it reflects organizational outcomes in the human resource management context.

Based on the theoretical review and the research model, the hypotheses are formulated as follows: H1: workload has a significant effect on employee performance; H2: work stress has a significant effect on employee performance; H3: workload has a significant effect on job satisfaction; H4: work stress has a significant effect on job satisfaction; H5: job satisfaction has a significant effect on employee performance; H6: job satisfaction mediates the effect of workload on employee performance; and H7: job satisfaction mediates the effect of work stress on employee performance.

Table 2. Research Variables and Indicators

Variable	Role in Model	Main Indicators/Meaning
Workload (X1)	Independent variable	Amount and complexity of tasks, time pressure, suitability between tasks and employee capacity, work distribution, and responsibility in completing healthcare services.
Work Stress (X2)	Independent variable	Psychological and emotional pressure caused by job demands, service complexity, time constraints, administrative duties, and responsibility for public health outcomes.
Job Satisfaction (Z)	Intervening variable	Positive feeling toward work, perceived fairness, recognition, supportive environment, meaningful work, and satisfaction with organizational conditions.
Employee Performance (Y)	Dependent variable	Job knowledge, ability to carry out work procedures, capacity to complete assigned tasks, timeliness, responsibility, and service quality.

3. Research Method

This study used a quantitative explanatory approach. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to test the relationships among measurable variables and examine the hypotheses statistically. The explanatory design was used to determine whether workload and work stress influence employee performance directly and indirectly through job satisfaction.

The research was conducted at Tapin Utara Community Health Center, Tapin Regency, South Kalimantan Province. The health center was selected because it represents a primary healthcare institution with diverse service responsibilities and increasing demands for performance improvement. The research context is relevant to human resource management because employees are required to provide quality public service while dealing with workload, work stress, and job satisfaction issues.

The population consisted of employees of Tapin Utara Community Health Center. The thesis abstract reports that the respondents were all employees of the health center, totaling 76 people. The use of the entire population is appropriate for a relatively small organizational population because it allows the researcher to obtain comprehensive internal data and reduce sampling error. The data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to respondents.

The questionnaire was developed based on the operational definitions of the variables. Workload items were designed to measure task quantity, task complexity, time pressure, and suitability of work with employee capacity. Work stress items measured job pressure, emotional tension, work demands, and perceived stress in completing duties. Job satisfaction items measured employee feelings toward work,

recognition, work environment, and organizational support. Employee performance items measured job knowledge, work method, completion of duties, responsibility, and timeliness.

Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS. PLS-SEM is suitable for examining complex models that include direct and indirect relationships among latent variables. The analysis involved measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. The measurement model evaluation examined validity and reliability, while the structural model evaluation examined path significance, hypothesis testing, mediation effects, and predictive power through the adjusted R-square value (Hair et al., 2021).

The significance of the relationships was determined using p-values, with a threshold of 0.05. A relationship was considered significant if the p-value was less than 0.05. The mediation effect was interpreted by examining whether workload and work stress influenced employee performance both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. A partial mediation pattern occurs when direct and indirect relationships are both significant.

Table 3. Summary of Research Design

Aspect	Description
Research approach	Quantitative explanatory research.
Research site	Tapin Utara Community Health Center, Tapin Regency, South Kalimantan Province.
Respondents	Employees of Tapin Utara Community Health Center; the thesis abstract reports 76 respondents.
Data collection technique	Structured questionnaire supported by limited observation and document-based contextual information.
Data analysis	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling using SmartPLS.
Main variables	Workload, work stress, job satisfaction, and employee performance.
Hypothesis criterion	Significant if p-value < 0.05.

4. Results

Descriptive Context of the Organization

Tapin Utara Community Health Center provides basic medical services and various public health programs for the surrounding community. Its activities include health promotion, preventive programs, school fitness testing, nutrition examinations, eye health checks, color blindness screening, and hearing examinations. These activities illustrate that the health center is not only responsible for treating illness but also for improving community health awareness and preventive behavior.

The five-year data show that the number of visits fluctuated, while the number of employees increased steadily. The highest number of visits was recorded in 2021, with 107,987 visits and 55 employees. In 2024, visits were recorded at 82,837 with 76 employees. Although visits decreased after 2021, the service burden did not necessarily become lighter because healthcare services also involve administrative work, program implementation, reporting, coordination, and outreach activities.

The increase in the number of employees suggests an organizational effort to strengthen service capacity. However, the field context described in the thesis indicates that workload and stress remain important issues because service complexity continues to grow. Therefore, the empirical results of this study should be understood within the broader context of increasing expectations for quality primary healthcare services.

Structural Model Results

The structural model testing shows that workload, work stress, and job satisfaction significantly influence employee performance. The results also show that workload and work stress significantly influence job satisfaction. These findings support the proposed model in which job satisfaction plays an intervening role between work-related demands and performance outcomes.

The first result indicates that workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.340 and a p-value of 0.043. This finding means that higher workload, when interpreted as proportional and manageable task responsibility, is associated with higher employee performance. In this organizational context, workload may encourage employees to become more disciplined, focused, and achievement-oriented.

The second result shows that work stress has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a coefficient of 1.075 and a p-value of 0.009. This result suggests that work stress may function as a performance stimulus when it remains at an optimal level. Employees may interpret job pressure as a challenge that must be overcome as part of their professional duty in serving the public.

The third and fourth results show that workload and work stress have positive and significant effects on job satisfaction, with reported values of 5.946 and 5.060 and p-values of 0.000. These findings indicate that work demands can increase satisfaction when employees perceive them as meaningful, manageable, and aligned with competence. The result also suggests that job satisfaction is influenced not only by comfort but also by achievement, responsibility, and a sense of contribution.

The fifth result shows that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a reported value of 7.043 and a p-value of 0.000. This result indicates that job satisfaction is the most dominant factor in the model. Employees who feel satisfied with their work are more likely to perform better, complete tasks responsibly, cooperate with colleagues, and maintain the quality of healthcare services.

The adjusted R-square value of 0.880 shows that 88% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by workload, work stress, and job satisfaction. This indicates that the model has strong predictive power. The remaining 12% may be explained by other variables not included in this study, such as leadership style, compensation, organizational culture, work-life balance, competence, or employee engagement.

Table 4. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Reported Value	p-value	Decision
H1	Workload -> Performance	0.340	0.043	Supported
H2	Work Stress -> Performance	1.075	0.009	Supported
H3	Workload -> Job Satisfaction	5.946	0.000	Supported
H4	Work Stress -> Job Satisfaction	5.060	0.000	Supported
H5	Job Satisfaction -> Performance	7.043	0.000	Supported
H6	Workload -> Satisfaction -> Performance	Partial mediation	Significant	Supported
H7	Work Stress -> Satisfaction -> Performance	Partial mediation	Significant	Supported

Mediation Results

The mediation results indicate that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between workload and employee performance. Workload influences performance directly, but it also influences performance indirectly by increasing job satisfaction. This means that workload management should not be evaluated

only by the number of tasks assigned to employees; it should also be evaluated by whether the workload creates a sense of achievement, fairness, and meaningful contribution.

Job satisfaction also mediates the relationship between work stress and employee performance. Work stress influences performance directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. This finding supports the idea that stress may have different consequences depending on how employees perceive and manage it. When stress is experienced as a meaningful challenge and supported by adequate organizational conditions, it may strengthen satisfaction and performance. However, if stress becomes excessive, chronic, or unsupported, it may create negative consequences.

The mediation pattern is interpreted as partial mediation because direct effects remain significant while indirect pathways through job satisfaction are also significant. In practical terms, this means that managers should address both direct and indirect mechanisms. They need to manage workload and stress as immediate performance factors, while also improving job satisfaction as a psychological and organizational mechanism that strengthens performance.

Discussion

The Effect of Workload on Employee Performance

The finding that workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance indicates that workload is not automatically harmful. In the case of Tapin Utara Community Health Center, workload appears to function as a performance driver when it is within a manageable range and is related to employees' professional responsibilities. Employees may become more active and disciplined when they are assigned clear and meaningful tasks.

This result can be understood through the concept of work challenge. Employees who receive tasks that match their competence may experience a sense of responsibility and achievement. The additional number of employees from 2020 to 2024 may also have helped distribute work more fairly, reducing the risk of extreme overload. Therefore, workload in this context may represent productive responsibility rather than excessive burden (Rohman & Ichsan, 2021; Rolos et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, the positive result should be interpreted carefully. A proportional workload can improve performance, but excessive workload may still reduce performance in the long term. Healthcare work often requires accuracy, emotional stability, and compliance with procedures. If workload becomes too high, employees may experience fatigue and errors. Thus, managers should maintain workload at an optimal level rather than assuming that more work will always improve performance.

The Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance

The positive and significant effect of work stress on employee performance suggests that stress in this setting may operate as eustress. Employees may interpret pressure as a signal that their work is important and requires serious attention. In a public healthcare institution, employees often understand that their tasks have direct consequences for community well-being. This sense of responsibility may transform pressure into motivation (Cooper & Quick, 2017; Robbins & Judge, 2017).

The result also reflects the possibility that employees have developed coping mechanisms through experience. When employees are accustomed to dealing with patient needs, administrative duties, and public health programs, a certain level of stress may stimulate faster task completion and stronger focus. However, this does not mean that stress should be increased intentionally. The key managerial issue is to keep stress manageable and prevent it from becoming chronic distress.

Managers should therefore distinguish between challenge stressors and hindrance stressors. Challenge stressors may include meaningful deadlines, professional responsibility, and opportunities to solve problems. Hindrance stressors may include unclear instructions, unfair workload, lack of facilities, interpersonal conflict, and bureaucratic obstacles. The former may support performance, while the latter may undermine it.

The Effect of Workload on Job Satisfaction

Workload was found to have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. This finding may appear contrary to the common assumption that workload reduces satisfaction. However, it becomes understandable when workload is perceived as fair, meaningful, and aligned with employee competence. Employees may feel satisfied when their work allows them to contribute to community health and when they can complete tasks successfully (Kusumawati & Linando, 2024; Zulher, 2020).

A manageable workload can create a sense of achievement. In healthcare organizations, employees may gain satisfaction from knowing that their work has social value. When tasks are meaningful and employees receive adequate support, workload may reinforce professional identity. This is particularly relevant in public service organizations where employees often value contribution, responsibility, and community impact. This finding implies that managers should not focus only on reducing workload. Instead, they should ensure that workload is distributed fairly, supported by adequate facilities, connected to clear goals, and matched with competence. A fair and meaningful workload can be a source of satisfaction, while unfair and excessive workload can become a source of dissatisfaction.

The Effect of Work Stress on Job Satisfaction

The study also found that work stress has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. This result can be explained by the challenge-stressor perspective. Employees may feel satisfied when they successfully handle challenging duties, especially when those duties are related to important public health responsibilities. Successfully overcoming pressure can increase confidence, pride, and perceived competence.

In the Tapin Utara Community Health Center context, employees may experience stress from service complexity and administrative demands, but these demands may also create meaning. When employees see that their efforts contribute to better service delivery, stress may be interpreted as part of professional achievement rather than merely as discomfort.

However, this positive relationship should not be generalized without caution. Stress can increase satisfaction only when it remains within an optimal range and when organizational support is present. Without supportive leadership, adequate facilities, and clear work procedures, stress may turn into dissatisfaction. Therefore, the practical implication is not to increase stress, but to improve stress management and organizational support.

The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Job satisfaction was found to be the strongest factor influencing employee performance. This finding confirms the central role of employee attitudes in organizational outcomes. Satisfied employees are more likely to work responsibly, follow procedures, cooperate with colleagues, and maintain service quality. In public healthcare services, these behaviors are crucial because the public directly experiences the quality of employee performance.

Job satisfaction may improve performance through several mechanisms. First, satisfaction increases motivation. Employees who feel positive about their work are more willing to exert effort. Second,

satisfaction strengthens commitment. Employees who feel valued are more likely to remain loyal to organizational goals. Third, satisfaction improves work behavior. Employees who experience a supportive work environment are more likely to cooperate, communicate effectively, and show initiative.

The strong effect of job satisfaction also indicates that performance improvement programs should not focus only on supervision and evaluation. Managers need to improve the work environment, provide recognition, ensure fair treatment, strengthen communication, and support employee development. These actions can increase satisfaction and indirectly strengthen organizational performance.

The Intervening Role of Job Satisfaction

The mediation findings show that job satisfaction explains part of the mechanism through which workload and work stress influence performance. Workload and stress may affect performance directly because they influence how employees allocate energy, attention, and effort. At the same time, they also affect performance indirectly because they shape how employees feel about their work.

This mediation pattern is important for human resource management. If workload and stress are managed only as operational issues, managers may overlook their psychological effects. Employees do not respond only to the number of tasks or the level of pressure; they respond to how those conditions are perceived. When employees perceive work demands as meaningful, fair, and supported, job satisfaction increases and performance improves.

Therefore, job satisfaction acts as a bridge between work demands and work outcomes. This means that managers should design policies that simultaneously maintain service productivity and employee well-being. Workload analysis, role clarification, supportive supervision, adequate facilities, and recognition systems can help convert work demands into positive motivation and performance.

Table 5. Managerial Interpretation of the Main Findings

Finding	Interpretation	Managerial Implication
Workload improves performance	Workload is perceived as productive responsibility when it is proportional and manageable.	Conduct regular workload analysis and distribute tasks based on competence.
Work stress improves performance	Stress may function as eustress when it is experienced as a meaningful challenge.	Maintain stress at an optimal level through support, role clarity, and communication.
Workload and stress improve satisfaction	Employees may feel satisfied when work demands create achievement and meaning.	Connect tasks with clear public service goals and provide recognition.
Job satisfaction strongly improves performance	Satisfied employees show stronger motivation, responsibility, and service quality.	Improve leadership support, facilities, fairness, and employee development.
Job satisfaction mediates relationships	Performance is influenced by both work conditions and employee attitudes.	Manage operational demands and psychological well-being together.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to human resource management literature by showing that workload and work stress can have positive effects on performance and job satisfaction when they are interpreted as proportional and manageable work demands. The findings support the view that work demands should not

always be treated as negative factors. Their effects depend on context, employee perception, and organizational support.

The study also strengthens the role of job satisfaction as an intervening variable. Job satisfaction helps explain how work conditions influence performance. This is theoretically important because it connects structural aspects of work, such as workload and stress, with psychological responses and behavioral outcomes. The findings suggest that future research should examine not only direct effects but also mediating and moderating mechanisms in healthcare human resource management.

In addition, this study contributes to the public sector and healthcare management literature. Many studies on workload and stress are conducted in private companies or general organizational settings. By focusing on a community health center, this study highlights the specific dynamics of primary healthcare organizations where employees must balance service quality, administrative accountability, and community health responsibilities.

Practical Implications

The first practical implication is the need for regular workload analysis. The management of Tapin Utara Community Health Center should evaluate workload at least every six months to ensure that tasks are distributed proportionally. Workload analysis should consider not only the number of patients but also program activities, reporting duties, outreach services, and the complexity of each role.

The second implication is the need to manage work stress systematically. Managers should identify sources of stress and distinguish between productive challenge stressors and harmful hindrance stressors. Productive pressure can motivate employees, but unclear roles, inadequate facilities, and unfair task distribution should be minimized. Stress management can include counseling, peer support, teamwork improvement, and more effective scheduling.

The third implication is the importance of strengthening job satisfaction. Since job satisfaction is the strongest factor affecting performance, managers should build a work environment that supports employee well-being. This can be done by improving communication, providing recognition, offering development opportunities, ensuring fair treatment, and maintaining adequate equipment and facilities.

The fourth implication relates to performance management. Performance evaluation should be used not only to judge employees but also to identify barriers to performance. If employees show low performance, managers should examine whether the cause is workload, stress, lack of competence, limited facilities, unclear procedures, or low satisfaction. A developmental approach is more appropriate than a purely administrative approach.

The fifth implication is the importance of aligning human resource policies with public service goals. Employees are more likely to feel satisfied when they understand how their work contributes to community health. Therefore, managers should communicate organizational goals clearly and help employees see the social value of their responsibilities.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of workload and work stress on employee performance with job satisfaction as an intervening variable at Tapin Utara Community Health Center, Tapin Regency, South Kalimantan Province. The results show that workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This indicates that a proportional and well-managed workload can encourage employees to work more effectively and achieve better performance.

Work stress also has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This finding suggests that work stress, when experienced as a manageable challenge, can function as eustress and stimulate employee performance. However, the positive effect should be interpreted carefully because excessive and prolonged stress may still produce negative consequences.

Workload and work stress have positive and significant effects on job satisfaction. These findings indicate that work demands can increase satisfaction when employees perceive them as meaningful, fair, and aligned with competence. Job satisfaction has the strongest positive and significant effect on employee performance, which confirms that satisfied employees are more likely to show better motivation, responsibility, and service quality.

Job satisfaction also functions as an intervening variable that partially mediates the effects of workload and work stress on employee performance. This means that workload and stress influence performance directly and indirectly through satisfaction. The adjusted R-square value of 0.880 shows that the model has strong predictive power, explaining 88% of the variation in employee performance.

Overall, the findings emphasize that improving employee performance in public healthcare institutions requires an integrated approach. Managers should not only control workload and stress but also create conditions that increase job satisfaction. Balanced workload, manageable stress, supportive leadership, adequate facilities, and meaningful work can strengthen both employee well-being and organizational performance.

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted in one community health center, so the findings may not fully represent all public healthcare institutions. Future research may include several community health centers or compare different districts to improve generalizability. Second, the study used a quantitative questionnaire, which may not fully capture the deeper experiences of employees. Future studies may use mixed methods by combining surveys with interviews or focus group discussions.

Third, the model included workload, work stress, and job satisfaction, but employee performance may also be influenced by other factors such as leadership style, compensation, organizational culture, work-life balance, competence, training, and employee engagement. Future research should include these variables to build a more comprehensive model. Fourth, the study used cross-sectional data, so causal interpretation should be made cautiously. Longitudinal studies may provide stronger evidence about how workload, stress, satisfaction, and performance change over time.

For practical development, Tapin Utara Community Health Center should conduct regular workload assessment, improve stress management programs, strengthen internal communication, provide adequate facilities, and create recognition mechanisms for employees. These strategies may increase job satisfaction and sustain high employee performance in public health service delivery.

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