

**The Effect of Load and Stress on Work Performance with Motivation  
as a Moderation Variable  
(Case Study at the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia)**

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**Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the effect of burden and stress on the work performance of employees of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia with motivation as a moderation variable. One of the main duties of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia is to provide services to the community related to education in the level of kindergarten to university in Indonesia. Given the large work area of employees and the heavy workload in the ministry, it is not uncommon for employees to lose motivation at work, that makes the achievement is low. 97 employees were involved in this study. Using the SEM-PLS method, the results of this study show that the indicator reliability, Cronbach alpha, composite reliability and AVE values are valid. The discriminant validity value is greater than the factor charge value. Workload negatively influences work performance either directly or indirectly, moderated by motivation. Work stress positively influences work performance directly or indirectly, moderated by motivation. Motivation has a positive influence on work performance.

**Keywords:** workload; stress; motivation; work performance; moderation

**INTRODUCTION**

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (MORA - RI) is one of the government institutions with the main task and function of a public servant. In particular, one of the important tasks of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia is to develop the substance aspects of Islamic education in Indonesia, ranging from kindergarten to higher education (Perpres, 2005). In carrying out its work, this institution has a lot to do with the communities and the academic communities in Indonesia. The obligations of the employees include providing training and assistance related to the curriculum, collecting data on institutional infrastructure in all lines of education, and evaluating the performance of teachers and education personnel in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. Given the large responsibility and the breadth of work areas of this Ministry, every employee is expected to be able to be responsive in completing their work. So that employees must be able to work quickly and under pressure.

However, many employees still have not shown brilliant work achievements. Due to the large workload and high-stress levels, the employees sometimes lose motivation at work. In anticipation, the leader carries out joint activities to maintain enthusiasm and increase employee motivation, such as doing outbound and gatherings. Nevertheless, because the heavy work keeps repeating itself throughout the year, motivational problems always arise and impact low work performance. The burden and stress level will increase towards the end of the year because, at this time, a report will be published on the performance and use of the budget for a year. At this time,

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the intensity of work and monitoring activities in the regions is also increasing. Some employees seem to be starting to experience physical exhaustion. This hypothesis is proved in the initial review conducted on 50 employees, as shown below.

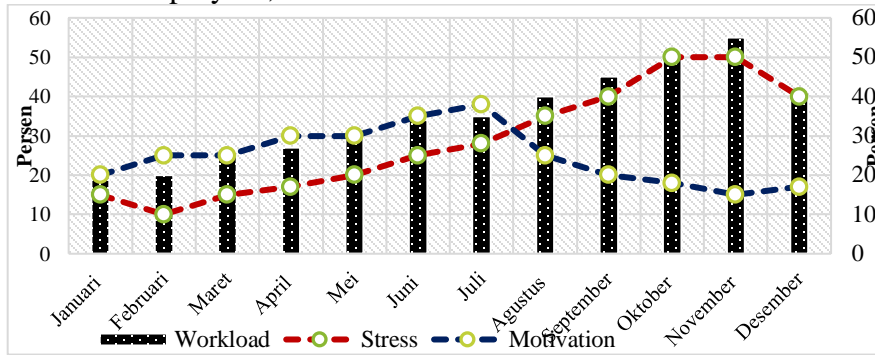


Figure 1  
Workload Percentage, Stress Level and Employee Motivation

The observations above show that throughout 2021, when workload increases, especially towards the end of the year, stress levels also increase and are followed by a decrease in work motivation by employees. This decrease in motivation mainly occurs when the workload gets bigger. If the above conditions are associated with employee achievements, then the picture below can explain the relationship between workload and employee achievements. The achievement is in the form of an award from the superior, salary increase or promotion. On average, every month, employees who get these achievements are quite volatile, but when the workload increases, the achievement tends to fall and rise again when the workload falls, such as in December.

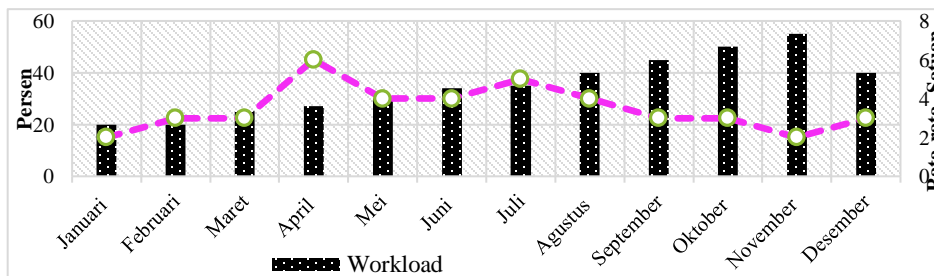


Figure 2  
Percentage of Workload and Employee Achievement

The explanation above further becomes the basis for this study, namely looking at how workload and stress levels influence employee work performance with work motivation as a moderation variable.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Workload

The workload is defined as an activity that someone in an organization must carry out and complete at a certain time (Mustika Suci, 2018). Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs No. 12/2008 explains that workload is a burden that must be completed by an organizational position/unit (Permendagri, 2008). Some of the implications of the magnitude of the workload are fatigue and saturation that will burden employees, it triggers low performance, and stress to initiate them

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to resign from the workplace (Hamizar, 2020). There are three categories of workloads for employees: workloads that meet standards, excessive workloads, and workloads that are too low (Suartana & Dewi, 2020). Some of the things that affect workload include (1) time pressure, (2) irregular working hours, (3) conflicts that occur in the workplace, (4) a work environment that is uncondusive, and (5) large responsibilities.

### **Stress Levels**

Stress at work is translated as a condition where tension affects a person's emotions, way of thinking, and physical condition (Hamizar, 2020). Stress levels can be classified into two, namely negative stress and positive stress. Negative stress often occurs in the workplace as defined by the presence of pressure and a work atmosphere that does not follow an employee's abilities. The greater the pressure, the more stressed an employee is. Stress that cannot be overcome properly results in the inability of an employee to interact positively with his environment, both in the sense of the work environment and the outside environment (Lestari & Rizkiyah, 2021). On the other hand, stress that can have a positive effect on a person is defined as the pressure that has a positive impact on employee in the form of increasing motivation, inspiring them to be better and work harder so that they can achieve achievements (Irkhami, 2015). However, it is undeniable that the most frequent workplace stress creates negativities (Firman Andri Satriadi, 2010).

### **Work Motivation**

Work motivation can be interpreted as a stimulus for employees to carry out their work (Forson et al., 2021). Good motivation has a positive impact on the performance of the employee and ultimately gives brilliant achievements. Some things that encourage employee motivation at work are attractive compensation, promising career paths, a comfortable work environment and company performance (Aarabi et al., 2013). If employees' needs for motivation are not responded properly, usually, employees tend to be lazy to work and they do not perform well.

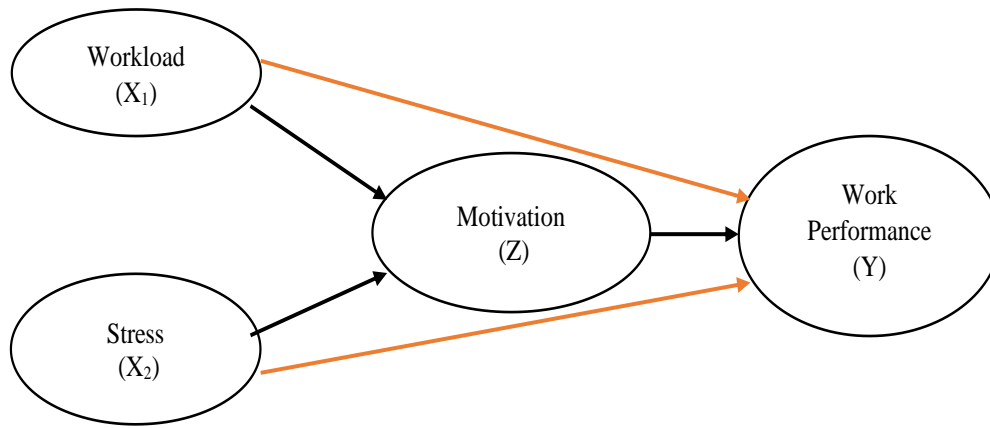
### **Work Performance**

Work performance is defined as a result of employee work (Lee et al., 2017). There are three components of work performance, namely, ability and acceptance of the explanation of task delegation, as well as the role and level of motivation of an employee. The higher the value for these three factors, the greater the work performance of an employee (Yongxing et al., 2017). Some factors that affect job performance are good abilities, stable and continuous motivation, and employee training.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research was conducted at the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia and it involved 97 employees as respondents. The analysis method used is *the Structural Equation Model – Partial Least Square* (SEMPLS), arguing that this method can analyze the influence of latent variables measured through observed indicators. (Hair et al., 2011). Another reason for using SEM PLS is that the sample size is small, it has little theory, and predictive accuracy in the model is paramount. The model specifications also cannot yet be taken into account. (Kurniawan, 2017). The flow of thinking in this study is shown below.

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**Figure 3**  
The flow of Research Thinking

The questionnaires given to respondents were answered using four Likert scales: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The variables and indicators used in this study are shown in the table below:

**Table 1 Research Variables and Indicators**

Variable	Indicator
Workload (WL)	The Severity of the Job Time Load
Work Stress (S)	Conditions of Employment Interpersonal Factors
Work Motivation (M)	Fisiologis Social Needs Award Needs Results of Work
Work Performance (WP)	Reward for work Knowledge and Skills

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Indicator Reliability

Indicator reliability is an indicator that shows how many variances a latent variable can explain an indicator. In indicator reliability, a reflective indicator must be eliminated from the measurement model when the loading value ( $\lambda$ ) is less than 0.4. Here are the loading factor ( $\lambda$ ) results obtained in the first path diagram.

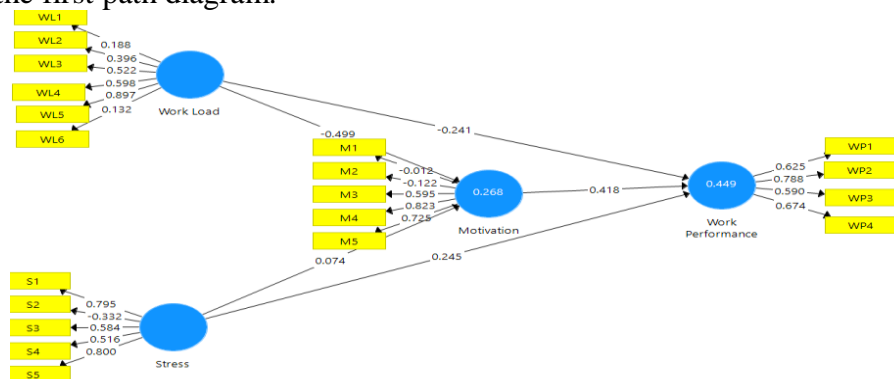


Figure 4

First Path Diagram and Loading Factor Values

The first path chart has values below 0.4 in the workload variable, namely the WL<sub>1</sub>, WL<sub>2</sub> and WL<sub>6</sub> indicators. In the stress variable, there is an indicator with a value below 0.4, namely S<sub>1</sub>. The motivation variable has two values below 0.4, namely indicators M<sub>1</sub> and M<sub>2</sub>. Finally, in the work performance variable, no indicator is below 0.4. After elimination, the second path diagram is shown below.

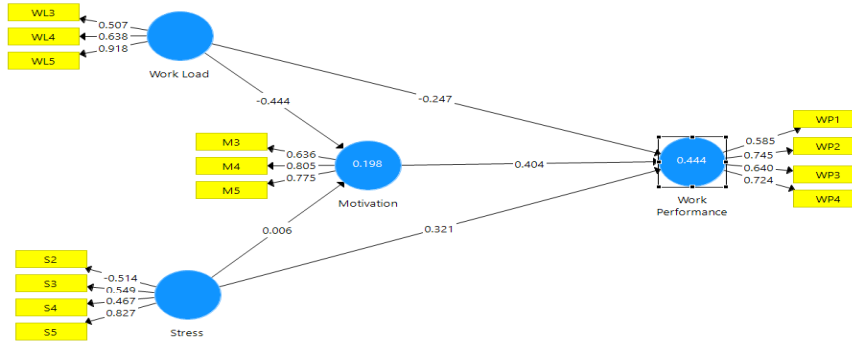


Figure 5

Second Path Diagram and Loading Factor Values

The second path of this model no longer has a loading factor value below 0.4, so it is considered feasible and valid for future tests.

**2. Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**

Cronbach alpha is a group of indicators that measure a variable with good composite reliability based on the value of a coefficient that is also determined to be more than 0.50. In comparison, composite reliability is a group of indicators that measure a variable with good composite reliability based on a predetermined score greater than 0.50. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is used in convergent validity testing because the value is obtained from the convergent validity output. In this study, the expected AVE value was more than 0.5. The three results in this study are valid, as shown in the table below.

Table 2  
Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Work Load	0.514	0.740	0.502
Stress	0.633	0.511	0.567
Motivation	0.621	0.785	0.551
Work Performance	0.605	0.770	0.548

**3. Discriminant Validity**

The next test is to look at discriminant validity, an automatic indicator measurement with a latent variable score. A discriminant value is considered valid if the load value of the factor is greater than the value of the cross-loading. All discriminate values in this study are valid because the load factor value is greater than the value of the cross-loading. The following table describes the results of discriminant validity.

Table 3

Discriminant Validity

Variable	Work Load	Stress	Motivation	Work Performance
Work Load	0.742 <sup>a</sup>			
Stress	0.048 <sup>b</sup>	0.606 <sup>b</sup>		
Motivation	0.445 <sup>b</sup>	0.096 <sup>b</sup>	0.709 <sup>b</sup>	
Work Performance	0.530 <sup>b</sup>	0.364 <sup>b</sup>	0.458 <sup>b</sup>	0.677 <sup>b</sup>

a = Factor payload value

b = Cross-loading value

**4. Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)**

The goodness of fit in PLS can be known from the coefficient of determination (R- Square) value. The value of R<sup>2</sup> in this study is:

Table 4  
R<sup>2</sup> and Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>

Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
Motivation	0.198	0.181
Work Performance	0.444	0.426

So the goodness of fit value is :

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= 1 - (1 - R_1^2) (1 - R_2^2) \\
 &= 1 - (1 - 0.198)(1 - 0.444) \\
 &= 1 - 0.445 \\
 &= 0.554
 \end{aligned}$$

These results show that the data above can explain 55.4% of the model, of which 19.8% is related to motivation and 44.4% is related to work performance, while other factors influence the rest.

**5. Direct Influence and Indirect Influence**

This study provides the results of direct and indirect influences as follows:

Table 5  
Direct and Indirect Influences

Pengaruh	Variable	Work Load	Stress	Motivation	Work Performance
Direct	Work Load				-0.180
	Stress				0.002
	Motivation				
	Work Performance				
Indirect	Work Load			-0.444	-0.447
	Stress			0.006	0.323
	Motivation				0.404
	Work Performance				

The results above show that, directly, the workload negatively influences work performance of 0.180, while stress in the world of work has a positive influence on the achievement of 0.02. Compared to indirect influences, workload exerts a negative influence on motivation (0.444) and ultimately negatively influences work performance (0.447). The stress level has a positive influence on motivation (0.0006) and finally has a positive influence on work performance (0.323). Self-motivation has a positive influence on work performance by 0.404.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study shows that excessive workload harms performance directly. Indirectly, through motivation as a moderation variable, workload also remains negative on performance. It proves that an excessive workload will only provide physical and mental fatigue. In such conditions, it is not easy to expect achievements from employees.

Work stress directly has a positive impact on work performance. Meanwhile, indirectly, through motivation, stress also has a positive influence. This positive stress provides enthusiasm and increases high motivation for employees to excel. Motivation itself also has a positive effect on work performance.

The results of this study explain the importance of reducing workload and maintaining positive stress conditions so that work performance continues to increase. In addition, motivation as a work mediation must always be considered to improve achievement.

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