

The Effect of Workload and Work Stress on Employee Performance with Motivation as an Intervening Variable: The Case at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of organizational culture, work motivation, and organizational commitment on employee performance in the Coal Handling and Transportation Unit of PT. Bukit Asam, Tbk, Tanjung Enim Mining Unit. This study is a causal associative study using a quantitative approach. The population used in this study comprised all employees of the Coal Handling and Transportation Division of PTBA UPTE, totaling 152. The sample used a purposive sampling technique with a Slovin formula of 111 respondents. The study's results indicate that organizational culture, motivation, and organizational commitment influence employee performance in the Coal Handling and Transportation Unit of PT. Bukit Asam Tbk, Tanjung Enim Mining Unit, both partially and simultaneously.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Motivation, Organizational Commitment, Employee Performance.

1. Introduction

Human resource management (HRM) is one of the most crucial aspects of an organization in today's era of globalization, as efficient use of human resources enables a company's survival and sustainable economic growth. Therefore, it is crucial to manage human resources effectively to maximize their knowledge and productivity in achieving organizational goals. One factor that executives must consider in their organizations is employee performance. According to [Busro \(2018\)](#), performance is the work results achieved by employees, both individuals and groups, within an organization, in accordance with the authority and responsibility granted by the organization in an effort to achieve the organization's vision, mission, and goals. This includes skills, perseverance, independence, and the ability to resolve problems within legally stipulated deadlines, in accordance with the law, morals, and ethics. Factors influencing employee performance are crucial and must be considered to ensure good performance. According to [Kasmir \(2019\)](#), factors that can influence performance, both work

results and behavior, include: abilities and expertise, knowledge, work design, personality, work motivation, leadership, leadership style, organizational culture, job satisfaction, work environment, loyalty, commitment, and work discipline. According to [Wibowo \(2018\)](#), several factors influence performance, including: personal factors such as skills, competencies, motivation, and personal commitment; leadership factors such as the quality of encouragement, guidance, and support from managers and teams; team factors such as the quality of support from organizational colleagues; system elements such as work systems and facilities provided by the organization; and situational factors such as high levels of pressure and changes in the internal and external environment.

According to [Suswati \(2022\)](#), several factors that can boost employee performance include employee work motivation. Work motivation can foster employee performance by satisfying employees' psychological needs. Motivation is a determinant of performance and is based on the assumption that without encouragement, work becomes lazy and boring. Therefore, work motivation also influences performance. Besides motivation, according to [Ekawarna \(2018\)](#), workload affects employee performance. Both excessively high and excessively low workloads correlate with low performance. Both increasing and decreasing workloads lead to decreased performance, but increases in the workload curve are more sensitive to adverse effects on employee performance. Therefore, the higher the workload, the lower the performance. Therefore, workload also affects performance. In addition to affecting performance, workload also influences motivation. Workload is a crucial aspect of human resource management that not only influences performance but also has a significant correlation with employee motivation. Work motivation is defined as a set of forces, both internal and external, that drive a person to engage in work behavior. Workload balance plays a crucial role. When the workload is at an optimal level, that is, in balance with the employee's abilities and expertise, it can serve as a positive challenge and ultimately increase motivation ([Luthfiana, Sari & Puspitorini, 2024](#)). A balanced workload allows employees to focus on achieving clear, challenging goals, which aligns with Goal-Setting Theory and encourages them to strive for excellence and improve performance ([Mellyani, Suhardi & Salju, 2025](#)).

Conversely, an imbalanced workload can undermine motivation. There are two main scenarios: First, workload overload (overcapacity): A workload that exceeds an employee's capabilities or work standards can trigger work stress, burnout, and feelings of depression ([Indrayana & Putra, 2024](#)). This condition can directly cause employees to lose motivation to work, which in turn can lead to a decline in the quality and quantity of performance. Research has shown that workload overload significantly reduces work motivation. Second, Undercapacity: A workload that is too low can also be detrimental. This condition can lead to boredom, a lack of challenge, and feelings of unappreciation, all of which decrease work motivation ([Luthfiana, Sari & Puspitorini, 2024](#)). Employees may feel their energy is not being utilized optimally, leading to demotivation. Therefore, for organizations, careful workload management is not merely an effort to maintain performance but also a fundamental strategy in maintaining and increasing employee motivation. Paying attention to workload indicators, such as working conditions, time utilization, and targets, is crucial for creating a supportive and motivating work environment ([Mellyani, Suhardi & Salju, 2025](#)).

In addition to workload, job stress also affects performance. According to [Sinambela \(2021\)](#), stress can lead to absenteeism, excessive use of alcohol or other drugs, poor performance, or even serious health problems. Stress is the body's response to pressure. When work-related stress occurs, its impact becomes a significant issue for both the individual employee and the

organization. Excessive stress can lead to decreased performance and a tendency to be unproductive, but moderate stress can help someone focus and perform. Therefore, work stress also impacts performance. In addition to impacting performance, work stress also impacts motivation. Work stress is an unavoidable phenomenon in the modern professional environment. Beyond its obvious negative impact on individual performance, work stress also has a close and significant link to aspects of work motivation. Motivation, defined as the psychological drive that causes, channels, and supports human behavior to achieve optimal work results ([Sinambela, 2021](#)), is the foundation for productivity and job satisfaction. When an employee experiences high levels of stress, whether due to excessive workload, time pressure, or interpersonal conflict, this tense condition can create a disproportion between physical and psychological balance. In both the short and long term, poorly managed stress can trigger various negative psychological and emotional symptoms, one of which is decreased work motivation ([Sinambela, 2021](#)). Research by [Luthfiana, Sari and Puspitorini \(2024\)](#) titled "The Influence of Workload and Work Motivation on Employee Performance at PT ABC" shows that (1) workload significantly affects employee performance at PT ABC. [Nanda and Sugiarto \(2020\)](#) conducted a study entitled "Work Stress: Its Effect on Work Motivation and Employee Performance." The results showed that work stress negatively impacted employee work motivation. Work motivation positively impacted employee performance. Work stress negatively impacted employee performance. Work stress indirectly impacted performance through work motivation as an intervening variable.

Many previous studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding the direction and significance of the relationship between work stress, workload, and motivation. Some studies found that work stress had a significant negative effect on motivation (for example, excessive stress reduces the drive to work). However, other studies found that work stress had a significant positive effect on motivation or no significant effect at all. This phenomenon can be explained by the distinction between eustress (positive stress that challenges and motivates) and distress (negative stress that weakens). Similarly, regarding workload, some studies found that a high workload decreases motivation, while others showed that a challenging workload actually increases motivation.

This research gap arises from a lack of clarity about the conditions or factors that determine whether job stress or workload has a positive (motivating) or negative (demotivating) impact. Therefore, further research is needed to identify mediating or moderating variables that explain this inconsistency, such as Job Satisfaction, Organizational Support, Individual Characteristics (e.g., resilience), or Leadership Style. Most research focuses on job stress and workload as independent (influencing) variables and motivation as the dependent (influenced) variable. However, the role of motivation in this relationship still needs to be explored more deeply. Motivation as a Moderating Variable: There is a gap in research into the extent to which an employee's level of motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) can moderate, strengthen, or weaken the relationship between Job Stress or Workload and other outcomes (such as Performance or Job Satisfaction). For example, Are employees with high intrinsic motivation more resilient to the negative impacts of high workloads than those with low motivation? Motivation as a Mediating Variable: There is also a gap in research into whether Workload or Job Stress directly influences outcomes such as Employee Performance or primarily shapes Employee Motivation. The emerging research gap is the need for research that explicitly tests models that position Motivation as a moderating variable between Stress/Workload and outcome variables (e.g., Performance) or as a mediating variable in the relationship.

Based on records of complaints received from the public at Bhayangkara Hospital, there were nine public complaints regarding performance, originating from various sources such as the suggestion box, police complaint assistance, Google reviews, and WhatsApp. All of them were resolved by Bhayangkara Hospital. Based on the hospital's satisfaction index report, the records reached 98.88%, an increase from 94% in 2023. The number of patients above reflects the amount of work employees must complete. Due to the large number of patients, the quality of employees' work has decreased, as some have been reluctant to participate in training or to keep up with the latest medical developments relevant to their work. Furthermore, employees simply wait for orders and do not proactively seek ways to improve efficiency or resolve problems. Nurses have duties such as caring for and monitoring patients, documenting medical records, administering medications and therapies, ensuring patient comfort and safety, and communicating with doctors and other medical teams to ensure patients receive the best possible care. However, there is still a phenomenon in which nurses fail to complete their work on time, for example, by delaying the recording of patient medical information, such as medical history, test results, and prescriptions. Some employees frequently arrive late to work or leave early (without permission), and they procrastinate on tasks that should be completed on time.

Employee effectiveness reflects the extent to which employees can achieve organizational goals appropriately, in accordance with hospital standards and professional ethics. In the hospital context, effectiveness is not only about productivity but also patient safety, inter-unit coordination, and adherence to clinical procedures. This phenomenon is evident in the responses of staff in the emergency department (ER), where care sometimes requires precision and relies on the technical capabilities of nurses, doctors, and other staff. Patients' families are sometimes impatient waiting for news and responses from hospital staff, which impacts patient and family satisfaction. Independence issues are also hampered by the network or the Hospital Management Information System (SIMRS), which is sometimes unstable or disrupted, forcing staff to work in both manual and electronic modes. This prevents employees from resolving problems independently. Furthermore, a lack of a supportive management style or coordination can leave employees needing assistance to resolve problems. Performance issues can also be caused by motivation. In a hospital, employee motivation is a crucial element because the work environment is stressful, high-risk, and focused on patient safety. Every day, doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, pharmacists, and administrative staff work at a fast pace that demands precision and empathy, making motivation the primary fuel that keeps them motivated. Regarding motivation, there are phenomena such as: Indications of a lack of motivation can be seen in a comfortable, safe working environment and in suboptimal facilities, such as underutilization of digital work processes (EMR, online queues). Another motivation factor is the lack of incentives for employees and staff who demonstrate superior performance. Incentives, however, encourage them to work harder, improve performance, and achieve organizational goals. These incentives can be monetary (bonuses, commissions) or non-monetary (recognition) to meet employee needs and improve employee welfare. Issues with incentives at Bhayangkara Hospital in Palembang are also related to the lack of fair formula standards, coordination, and administrative barriers, as well as budget inefficiencies that lead to cuts or delays, often due to differences in employee status.

Another indicator of employee motivation is recognition for successful work completion. Often, the work performed is underappreciated, leading employees to feel it's taken for granted. Recognition, such as material rewards or non-material rewards like praise and certificates, is suboptimal. Related to motivational indicators, there are issues within the work itself: some

employees still feel they haven't established a sense of professional identity. This makes them less motivated to work. Employees also lack a sense of pride in the healthcare profession, which may lead to a lack of commitment to their work. Another phenomenon identified is the issue of workload. Primary data for 2024 showed that the number of patients provided with healthcare services to police personnel, civil servants, families, and the general public exceeded the target of 277,070, reaching 385,880 patients, or 139.27%. This also indicates an increasing workload and, of course, increases stress for both employees and hospital staff.

In relation to work conditions, the above conditions sometimes result in employees performing tasks that do not align with their primary duties and functions (tupoksi). This is because additional duties outside of their primary duties often consume work time. These duties vary by work unit and often overlap with those of other healthcare workers. Excessive duties place a heavy burden on employees. Several nursing staff stated that the number of human resources did not match the large number of patients. Time management issues also arise due to increased work volume, requiring extra time to complete tasks. Consequently, some tasks cannot be completed on time, which certainly impacts overall performance. An ideal nursing workload (Safe Workload) must consider patient safety, quality of care, and the nurse's mental/physical health. Furthermore, workload is calculated based on the patient's level of dependency (e.g., pediatric or infant patients who require more time for care), the type of procedure (e.g., chemotherapy vs. regular inpatient care), and work documentation (nursing reports, electronic medical records). Nurses with heavy workloads often skip breaks and are unable to think clearly due to the sheer volume of work required and a lack of collaboration among colleagues.

Common problems with work standards in hospitals include a lack of awareness and a culture of incident reporting (patient safety and OHS), where employees often consider incidents common and are reluctant to report them (a "it just happens" culture). Furthermore, a tendency to assume or underestimate potential hazards is a common problem. Another issue is budget and equipment limitations, which result in incomplete OHS facilities and infrastructure (e.g., sprinklers and smoke detectors). All of these factors result in suboptimal implementation of standards and impact the quality of service, workplace safety, and patient safety. Another phenomenon identified by researchers is related to work stress. Several employees also reported fatigue, which impaired their health. Psychologically, indications of workload problems are evident in communication between healthcare workers and patients, which often leads to problems, such as difficult-to-understand medical terms, staff lacking empathy due to fatigue, and patients' families interpreting instructions differently. As a result, patients feel that procedures are inadequately explained or misunderstood. This can lead to dissatisfaction, complaints, and even medical disputes.

Furthermore, several employees reported difficulty concentrating and emotional instability while working. Some employees exhibited a loss of concentration due to the workload exceeding their capabilities. Physically, symptoms of problems can be seen in some employees experiencing acid reflux. This is evident in nurses' complaints of frequent consultations with doctors or fellow medical staff. Hospital staff often work under time pressure, resulting in some tasks being delayed. During peak hours, communication becomes faster but less thorough. For example, nurses in the emergency room must coordinate with doctors while treating several patients simultaneously. This can sometimes lead to staff avoiding their duties (i.e., being reluctant to complete tasks). Medical staff often have to answer questions from patients' families during clinical work, and limited time can make messages easily interrupted or incomplete.

2. Literature Review

The Effect of Workload on Performance. Workload also affects performance. According to [Ekawarna \(2018\)](#), workload impacts employee performance. Both excessively high and excessively low workloads correlate with low performance. Both increases and decreases in workload lead to decreased performance, but increases in the workload curve are more sensitive to negative impacts on employee performance. Therefore, the higher the workload, the lower the performance. Research by [Indrayana and Putra \(2024\)](#) found that workload has a positive, significant effect on employee performance. This contrasts with the findings of [Luthfiana, Sari and Puspitorini \(2024\)](#), who found that workload has an insignificant positive effect on employee performance. Furthermore, research by [Hafizah, Dharma and Irfani \(2024\)](#) found that workload has a negative, insignificant effect on hospital employee performance. A study [Nanda and Sugiarto \(2020\)](#) revealed that motivation, workload, and work stress impact employee performance, which is mediated by work satisfaction. Workload issues were identified in this study. Several employees admitted that their work assignments did not align with their primary duties and functions (tupoksi). Excessive tasks placed a heavy workload on employees. Employees stated that the high patient volume was not matched by adequate staffing, resulting in increased workload and the need for extra time to complete tasks. Employees with high workloads often skipped breaks and were unable to think clearly. Employees also reported a lack of support from superiors and a lack of cooperation among coworkers in completing tasks.

The Effect of Job Stress on Performance. Job stress also impacts performance. According to [Sinambela \(2021\)](#), stress can lead to absenteeism, excessive use of alcohol or other drugs, poor performance, or even serious health problems. Stress is the body's response to pressure. When work-related stress occurs, its impact becomes a significant issue for both the individual employee and the organization. Excessive stress can lead to decreased performance and a tendency to be unproductive, but moderate stress can help someone focus and perform better. Research by [Indrayana and Putra \(2024\)](#) shows that job stress has a positive, significant effect on the performance of hospital employees. Meanwhile, research by [Rahmah, Andarini, Anggraini and Idris \(2024\)](#) indicates that job stress significantly reduces employee performance. This contrasts with the findings of [Chasanah and Maulida \(2023\)](#), who reported that job stress did not affect employee performance. The phenomenon of work stress was found in this study. Several employees reported experiencing fatigue, frequent headaches, acid reflux, and sleep disturbances. Furthermore, some employees reported difficulty concentrating and emotional instability at work. Some employees became forgetful and lazy in completing tasks. This resulted in suboptimal patient care, reduced work quality, and incomplete work on time.

The Influence of Work Motivation on Performance. Work motivation is one of the factors that influences performance, both results and work behavior. According to [Kasmir \(2019\)](#), work motivation influences both results and work behavior. If employees have a strong internal or external drive, they will be motivated to perform well. Research by [Nanda and Sugiarto \(2020\)](#), [Rahmah, Andarini, Anggraini and Idris \(2024\)](#), and Oktaviani & Irmayanti (2021) shows that motivation has a significant positive effect on performance. This contrasts with the findings of [\(Mellyani, Suhardi & Salju, 2025\)](#), who reported that work motivation did not significantly affect employee performance. A phenomenon of underrecognized and under rewarded high-performing employees was found. Employees working in high-risk environments did not receive additional incentives. Yet, providing incentives, recognition, and rewards is crucial for

increasing work motivation. Further employee complaints included unfair distribution of service, late service delivery, and an unsupportive and uncondusive work environment. The lack of facilities, infrastructure, and work equipment also impacted on motivation. A lack of facilities, infrastructure, and equipment will impact on the quality of patient care.

3. Research Method

The study focuses on Bhayangkara Hospital Palembang, located at Jalan Jenderal Sudirman KM 4. RW 5, Ario Kemuning, Kemuning District, Palembang City, South Sumatra 30128. This study is also a verification (causal) study. This study involves three independent variables, one dependent variable, and one control variable. The independent variables contained in this study include workload (X1), stress (X2), and motivation (Z). The dependent variable is employee performance (Y). The indicators of employee performance are work quality, punctuality, effectiveness, and independence. The indicators of work motivation are work facilities, work performance, recognition from superiors, and the work itself. The indicators of employee workload are work conditions, use of work time, targets to be achieved, and work standards. The indicators of work stress include psychological, physical, and behavioral factors. The population used in this study comprises all medical personnel at Bhayangkara Hospital Palembang, namely 317 people: Nursing Personnel, Other Health Personnel, and Non-Health Personnel. The sample used in this study of employees at Bhayangkara Hospital in Palembang comprised 150 participants. The sampling technique used was probability sampling with cluster sampling. The data used was primary data collected using a questionnaire. The data analysis technique used to measure the variables in this study was structural equation modeling (SEM). Below is the SEM.

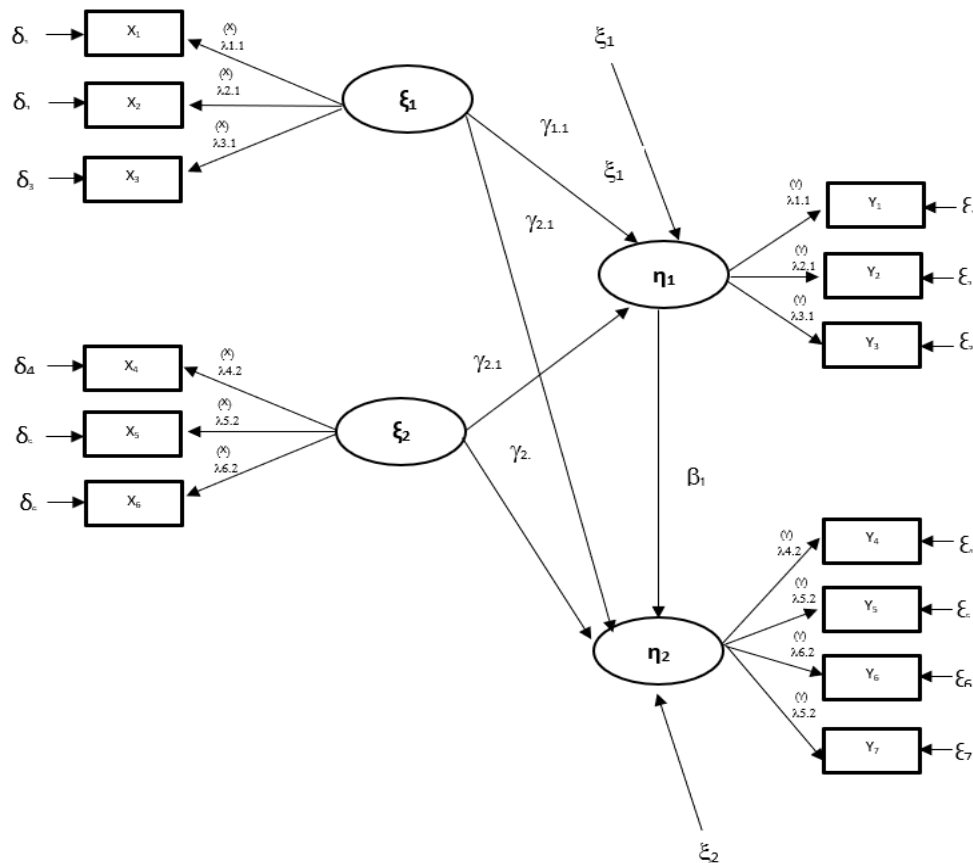


Figure 1. SEM

$\xi_1 = (\text{ksi}_1)$; exogenous latent variable: workload

$\xi_2 = (\text{ksi}_2)$; exogenous latent variable: work stress

$\eta_1 = (\text{eta}_1)$; endogenous latent variable: work motivation

$\eta_2 = (\text{eta}_2)$; endogenous latent variable: performance

$\gamma = (\text{gamma})$; direct relationship between exogenous variables and endogenous variables

$\zeta = (\text{zeta})$; error in the equation,

$\beta = (\text{beta})$; direct relationship between endogenous variables and endogenous variables

$\Delta = (\text{delta})$, measurement error of exogenous variables

$\Phi = (\text{Psi})$, a method for showing the covariance or correlation matrix between a set of constructs

$\varepsilon = (\text{epsilon})$, measurement error of exogenous variable indicators

$\lambda = (\text{Lambda})$, relationship between exogenous and endogenous latent variables and their indicators.

X1, X2, X3 = indicators for the exogenous variable workload

X4, X5, X6 = indicators for the exogenous variable work stress

Y1, Y2, Y3 = indicators for the endogenous variable work motivation

Y4, Y5, Y6, Y7 = indicators for the endogenous variable performance

4. Findings and Discussions

Based on the Goodness of Fit appendix, a summary of the model fit test results can be made as follows:

Table 1. Goodness of Fit

<i>Goodness Of Fit Index</i>	<i>Cut Of Value</i>	Hasil Analisis	Evaluasi Model
P-Value	$\geq 0,05$	0,00	Fit
RMSEA	$\leq 0,1$	0,09	Good Fit
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,66	Fit
NNFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,95	Good Fit
SRMR	$\leq 0,1$	0,09	Good Fit
IFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,96	Good Fit
CFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,96	Good Fit
RFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,92	Good Fit
NFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,93	Good Fit

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). This analysis is conducted separately for each construct to test the measurement model by evaluating construct validity and reliability.

Based on the goodness-of-fit results, the model is good, as the overall goodness-of-fit index criteria fall within the good fit category.

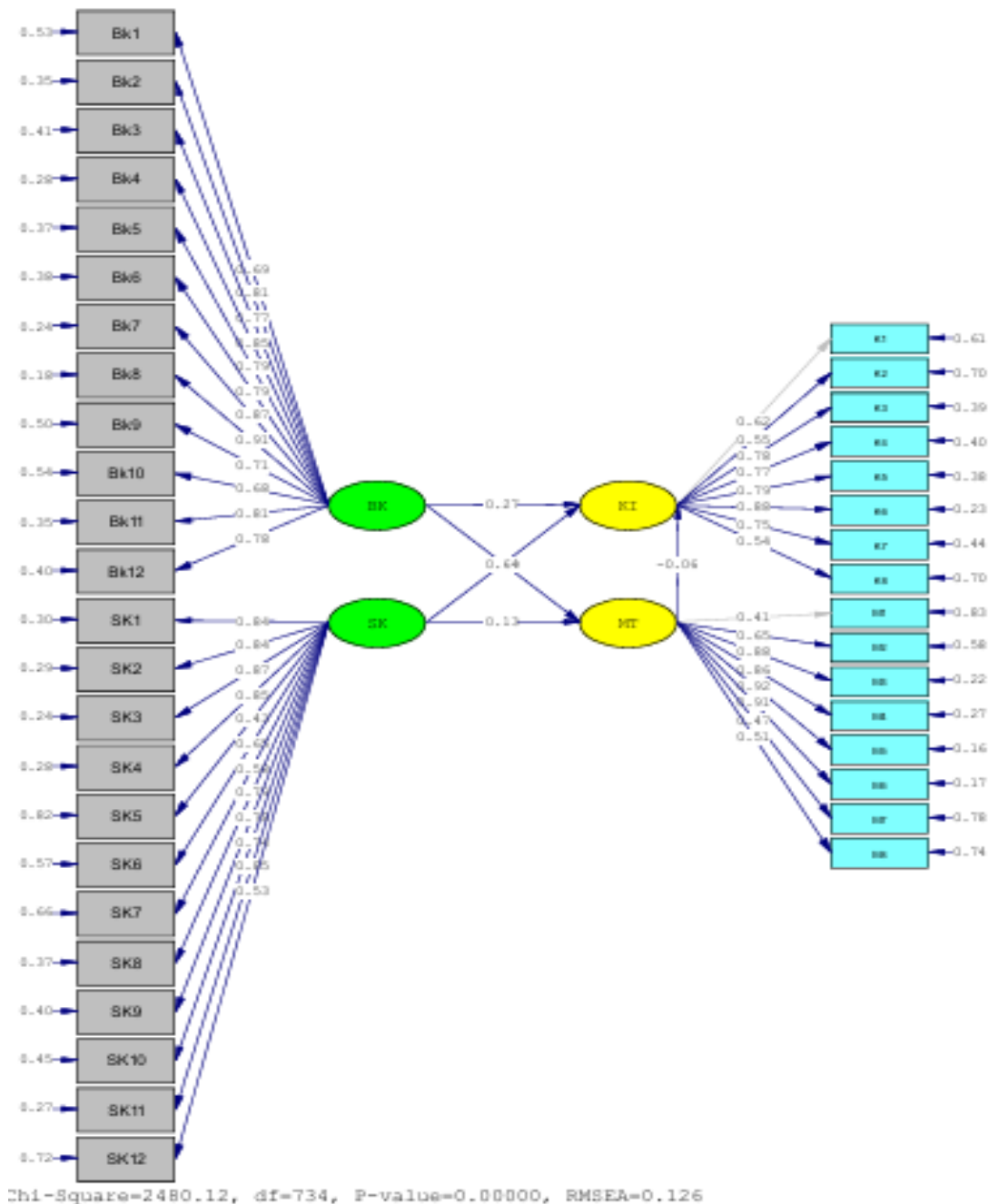


Figure 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The results show that all loading factor variables have values greater than the error value. This indicates that the initial CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) test has met the requirements for subsequent testing.

Structural Model. Next, we will test the structural model by assessing the significance of the

influence.

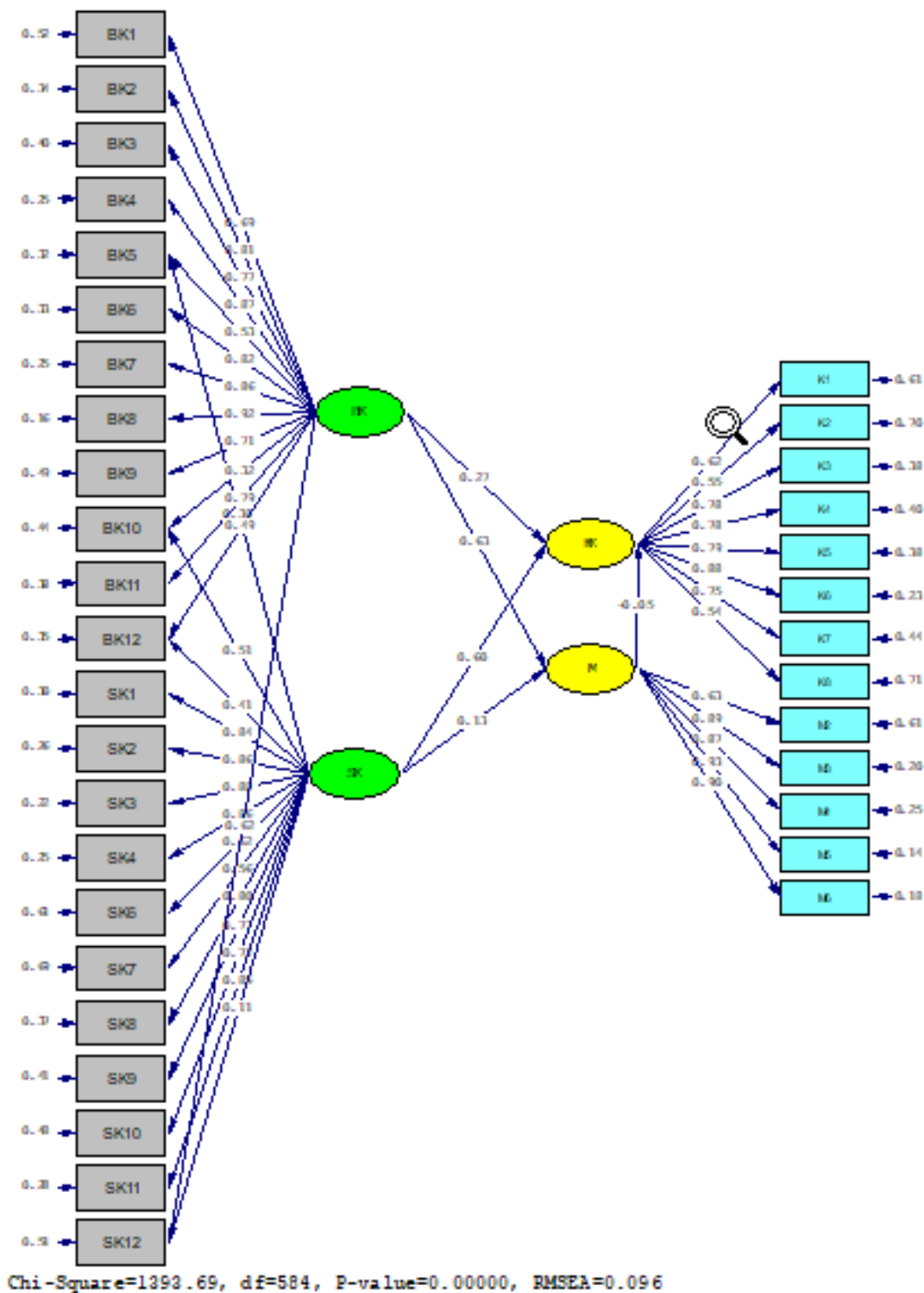
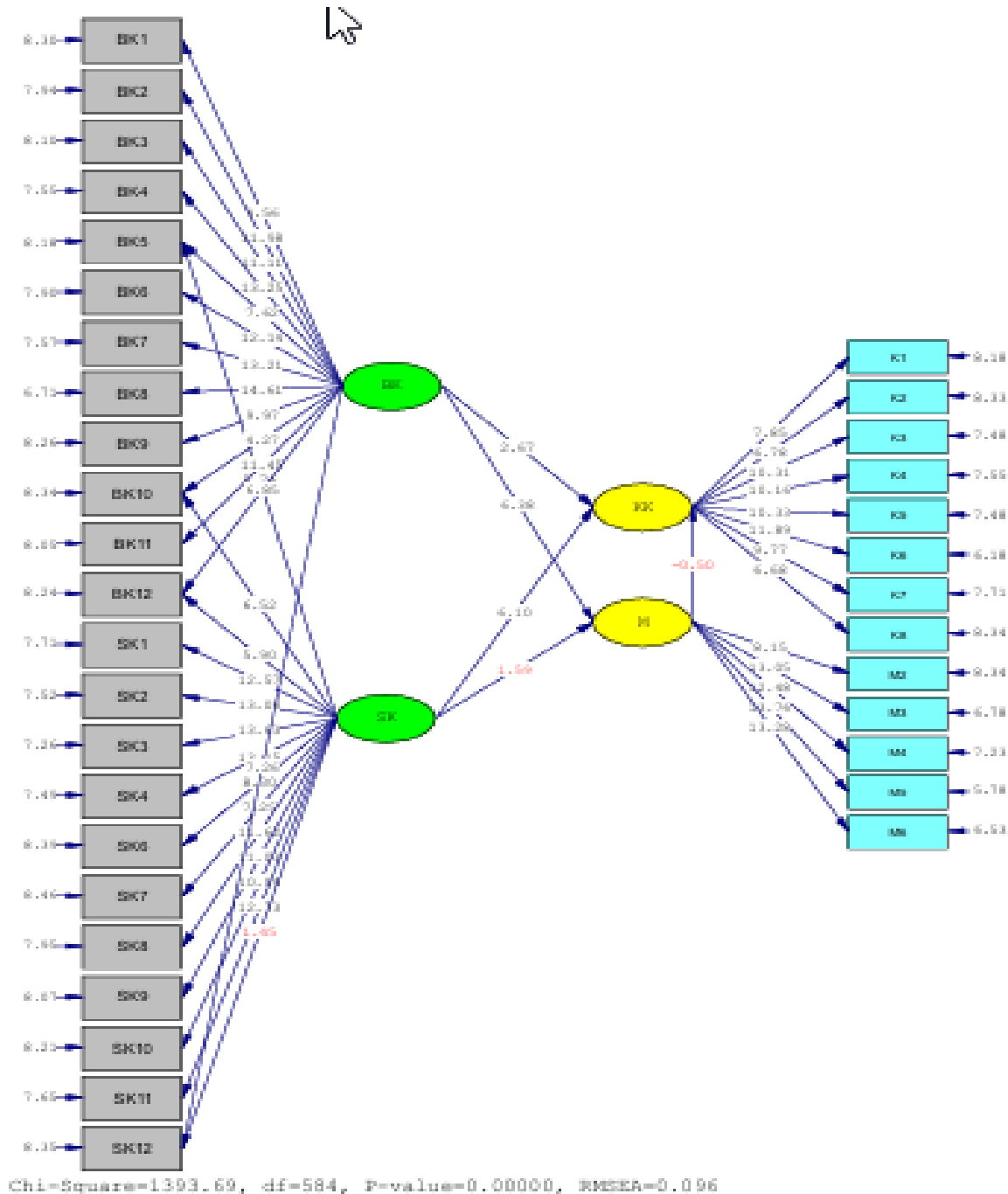


Figure 2. Structural Equation Modeling

Figure 3. t values



The Effect of Workload on Performance. Figures 2 and 3 show that the calculated T-values are $2.67 > 1.96$, so H_a is accepted. This means that with a 5% margin of error, it can be concluded that workload has a significant effect on performance. Based on the test results, workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang. This means that the higher the workload, the better the performance of the hospital's employees. These research results align with [Mangkuprawira \(2018\)](#) opinion that employee

performance is influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Among extrinsic factors is workload. Therefore, these research results align with the theory that workload influences performance. This means that workload is not merely a matter of tasks but also encompasses the deployment of resources and the determination of timeframes. These results align with previous research on workload variables by [Indrayana and Putra \(2024\)](#), which found that workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Previous studies by [Cesilia and Kosasih \(2024\)](#) and [Umairoh, Supardi, and Dharmanto \(2025\)](#) found that workload has a positive and significant effect on hospital employee performance. This differs from the findings of [Umairoh, Supardi, and Dharmanto \(2025\)](#), who found that workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Furthermore, research by [Hafizah, Dharma and Irfani \(2024\)](#) found that workload has a negative, insignificant effect on hospital employee performance.

The Effect of Job Stress on Performance. Figures 2 and 3 show that the calculated T-values are $6.10 > 1.96$, so H_a is accepted. This means that with a 5% margin of error, it can be concluded that job stress has a significant effect on performance. Based on test results, work stress has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at Bhayangkara Hospital in Palembang. [Mangkunegara \(2017\)](#) defines work stress as a condition in which an individual experiences pressure or tension in their work environment, causing them to respond negatively and feel burdened in completing their duties ([Mangkunegara 2017](#)). A previous study by [Indrayana and Putra \(2024\)](#) found that work stress has a positive and significant effect on hospital employees' performance. Meanwhile, research by [Rahmah, Andarini, Anggraini and Idris \(2024\)](#) found that work stress negatively and significantly affects employee performance. This contrasts with the findings of [Chasanah and Maulida \(2023\)](#), who found that work stress did not affect employee performance. Employee performance is not fully optimal due to several factors, including the fact that almost every employee has requested medical consultation, which indicates the work stress employees face. Bhayangkara Hospital should conduct counseling and consultation programs for each employee within a certain period to reduce stress levels. Furthermore, some employees report unusual physical complaints, which also indicate the level of stress they experience. Bhayangkara Hospital should conduct examinations within a certain period to identify the problems each employee is experiencing with their physical complaints. Furthermore, unstable eating patterns among employees can be addressed by improving work-hour scheduling.

The Effect of Workload on Motivation. Figures 2 and 3 show that the calculated T-values are $6.38 > 1.96$, so H_a is accepted. This means that with a 5% margin of error, it can be concluded that workload has a significant effect on motivation. Based on test results, workload has a positive and significant effect on motivation at Bhayangkara Hospital in Palembang.. An appropriate workload that aligns with employees' capacity can increase motivation, as employees perceive these tasks as challenges that can be overcome. However, an excessive, unstructured workload that exceeds an individual's capabilities can lead to physical and mental fatigue and decreased work motivation. This condition can lead to decreased performance, stress, and even burnout (emotional exhaustion). Therefore, if the workload increases, performance can also improve, as long as it is appropriate and aligns with employee capacity, thereby increasing motivation. High workloads, especially those not balanced with adequate resources or compensation, are strongly correlated with decreased work motivation, increased absenteeism, and turnover intention. For example, research in the manufacturing sector shows that time pressure and lack of task clarity, components of the workload, significantly reduce

employee enthusiasm for work. Previous research by [Cesilia and Kosasih \(2024\)](#) showed a positive effect of workload on teacher motivation, as well as a joint effect of workload and job burnout on work motivation. This is because most nurses are driven by various factors, one of which is workload; when workload is high, their motivation to work in the hospital decreases, which can affect their motivation. Based on the results above, every nurse must have a passion for their work, which will allow us to overcome difficult tasks with a love for what we do. The agency must also actively participate in reviewing and making policies regarding hospital issues.

The effect of work stress on motivation. Based on Figures 2 and 3, the calculated T-values are $1.59 < 1.96$, so H_a is rejected. This means that with a 5% margin of error, it can be concluded that work stress has no significant effect on motivation. Based on the test results, work stress did not have a significant effect on motivation at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang. Work stress in the hospital environment can affect motivation, but not always significantly. Some studies show that high stress reduces motivation (significantly negative), but other studies found that stress has no significant impact on performance/motivation because nurses are accustomed to high responsibilities. The study by [Cesilia and Kosasih \(2024\)](#) found that work stress negatively and significantly affects work motivation at Siti Fatimah Regional Specialized Hospital for Women and Children. The influence of work stress on work motivation indicates that the more stressed an employee is, the lower their work motivation. Excessive stress can disrupt employee work motivation. However, if stress levels are too low, it can also lead to a lack of employee enthusiasm for work. Therefore, the UPT. It is important for the Siti Fatimah Regional Specialized Hospital for Women and Children to monitor and manage stress, so that employee stress can become a source of motivation and drive improved performance at the UPT (Technical Implementation Unit) of the Siti Fatimah Regional Specialized Hospital for Women and Children. Work stress is a condition that employees inevitably experience and is often considered unpleasant. It can cause tension that affects a person's emotions, thinking, and physical condition. High levels of stress within an institution can lead to a lack of employee motivation. As the primary actors in an institution, human resources need to be nurtured through various means. Stress arises from pressure or tension stemming from a lack of harmony between an individual and their environment, as well as a lack of motivational support from both the institution and the surrounding environment, resulting in high levels of work stress and low work motivation. High levels of work stress experienced by employees can easily lead to a decline in motivation. According to [Kasmir \(2019\)](#), stress is a state of tension that affects a person's emotions, thinking, and physical condition. Stress that is not managed properly usually results in an inability to interact positively with their environment, both within and outside the workplace. The heavy workload and responsibilities given to employees by the company often lead to work stress. Employee stress is negative, characterized by the emergence of physical and behavioral symptoms. Potential stress can become dynamic stress, or actual stress, if stressors develop. Some factors that trigger stress include the environment, the organization, and the individual.

The effect of motivation on performance. Based on Figures 2 and 3, the calculated T-values are $0.60 < 1.96$, so H_a is rejected. This means that with a 5% margin of error, it can be concluded that motivation has no significant effect on performance. Based on the test results, motivation as an intervening variable weakens performance. Some questionnaire results indicated that 90% of employees felt proud of their profession. Furthermore, 88% of employees reported having a sense of professional identity. This indicates that employees are already proud of their

profession and their identity as part of Bhayangkara Hospital. In this case, the work stress variable does not need to be supported by the intervening variable of motivation. Supporting the motivation variable actually weakens the effect of work stress on performance. This statement is based on the questionnaire results and responses to several available statement options, indicating that work stress does not affect performance through the intervening variable of motivation. Work stress generally has a negative impact and decreases employee performance because it triggers anxiety and dysfunctional behavior. Although generally negative, several studies have shown that well-managed low or moderate levels of stress (eustress) can be motivating, but distress (negative stress) is the main cause of the decline. However, motivation acts as an intervening variable, mediating this relationship: high motivation can mitigate the negative impact of stress and improve performance. Companies provide stress management training, improve personnel policies, and create a free communication environment. The role of motivation as an intervening variable, where work motivation mediates the effect of stress on performance. When work stress is high, but employees have strong work motivation (intrinsic/extrinsic), performance decline can be minimized or even transformed into improved performance. Research by [Luthfiana, Sari and Puspitorini \(2024\)](#) found that work motivation weakens the mediation of stress on performance by acting as a protective factor (buffer). High motivation increases focus, productivity, and commitment, thereby mitigating the negative impact of stress (such as high pressure or fatigue) on performance decline. Strong motivation transforms stress into a challenge, not a burden. Motivation as a Buffer: When work motivation is strong, the negative impact of work stress on employee performance can be mitigated, preventing immediate, drastic declines in productivity. Positive Role of Motivation: High motivation enables employees to better adapt to change, enhance collaboration, and remain focused on goals even under pressure. The Impact of Low Motivation: Conversely, when motivation is low, work stress will accelerate performance decline because there are no motivating factors to maintain employee morale. Motivation acts as a moderator, strengthening the relationship between work stress and performance. This means that although work stress tends to decrease performance, high motivation can mitigate its negative impact and even increase productivity. Thus, motivation can be a significant balancing factor in the relationship between work stress and employee performance. This is acceptable, as motivation's moderating role has been shown to positively and significantly influence the relationship between work stress and employee performance.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that: (1) Workload has a significant positive effect on work motivation at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang; (2) Work stress has a positive but insignificant effect on work motivation at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang; (3) Workload has a significant positive effect on employee performance at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang; (4) Work stress does not have a significant positive effect on employee motivation at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang; (5) Motivation has a positive but insignificant effect on employee performance at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang; (6) Motivation weakens the effect of workload on employee performance at Bhayangkara Hospital, Palembang. Management needs to increase staffing to serve patients and customers at Bhayangkara Hospital so that employees do not overlap with their primary duties. Furthermore, manage the volume of work to fit the available time. Management needs to focus on reducing stress by providing leave and holidays, offering activities that reduce employee stress, such as employee gatherings or outbound activities, and holding celebrations, such as Independence Day commemorations. Leaders need to increase employee motivation by

improving the salary structure, offering incentives for achievement, providing year-end bonuses, and showing appreciation through awards and respect.

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