

THE ROLE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE IN IMPROVING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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Abstract:

The impact of social support, work-life balance, and work stress on employees' mental health and productivity at work was investigated in this study. By referencing earlier empirical investigations, this research uses a structural equation modeling approach to analyze the interactions between variables. By gathering information from 200 respondents who work in permanent private offices in Pekanbaru City, this study examines construct validity and reliability and tests the suggested theories. The findings indicate that social support, work-life balance, and workplace stress all impact workers' mental health. Consequently, higher employee performance was linked to more excellent mental health. The mediating variable of mental health successfully demonstrated the association between these characteristics and performance. To enhance employee mental health and performance, work-life balance, strong social support, and holistic stress management are crucial. Adopting stress management initiatives, developing social support networks inside the workplace, and work-life balance-promoting regulations were among the suggested measures to support mental health and peak performance.

Keywords: work stress, social support, work-life balance, mental health and employee performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Previous empirical research has revealed that job stress impacts employee performance (Bakker & de Vries, 2021; Rasool et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2019). Empirical studies Job stress does not affect employee performance (Basit & Hassan, 2017; Catherine & Fonceca, 2022). Social support influences employee performance (Bavik et al., 2020; Jolly et al., 2021). However, other empirical studies show that social support does not affect employee performance (Vuong et al., 2023). Furthermore, several empirical studies reveal that work-life balance impacts employee performance (Bataineh, 2019; Bhende et al., 2020). Other research shows that work-life balance does not affect employee performance (Dibua et al., 2021). The author believes that prior research findings could be more consistent and that a study gap must be filled to fully comprehend how factors such as job stress, social support, and work-life balance influence employee performance. This research empirically investigates employee

performance, drawing on past research and empirical investigations undertaken by previous researchers. The research object is private offices in Pekanbaru City, and the population comprises permanent employees of private offices. These variables were selected based on previous research that revealed research gaps. In one research paradigm, researchers propose solutions with mediating variables. There may be other proprietary variables that can fill this research gap. Using a structural equation modeling approach, this research uses a mediating mechanism for mental health variables in the workplace, which mediate work stress, social support, and work-life balance on employee performance. Mediating variables are intended to fill the gap between endogenous and exogenous variables in this research. The choice of mental health as mediation was because no previous research used mental health as mediation, so this research needed to add this mental health variable. This research aims to deepen the determinants of employee performance, considering the contribution of work stress, social support, and

work-life balance. A comprehensive analysis of these aspects is hoped to provide better insight into how companies can improve employee mental health to increase employee performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Effect of Job Stress on Mental Health

Work stress can trigger physiological and psychological responses that disrupt mental balance. Constant stressful situations at work can increase the risk of mental disorders such as anxiety or depression. High levels of stress can result in emotional tension, persistent anxiety, and decreased concentration and motivation. Work-related stress has the power to induce both physiological and psychological reactions that disturb the delicate balance of one's mental state. Consistent exposure to stressful circumstances in the workplace significantly heightens the likelihood of developing mental health issues like anxiety or depression. Intense stress levels often manifest in emotional strain, persistent feelings of anxiety, and a noticeable decline in both concentration and motivation.(Costa et al., 2024; Frasilho et al., 2015; Haar et al., 2014; Hon et al., 2023)

The Effect of Social Support on Mental Health

Social support from coworkers, superiors, or work groups can provide support, confidence, and security that protects individuals from stress. This social support can reduce the negative impact of stress on mental health. Social support can reduce stress, increase self-confidence, and improve mood and emotional well-being. Social support within a professional setting encompasses a network of individuals be it colleagues, supervisors, or team members offering a crucial foundation of support, bolstering individuals' confidence and security. This cohesive support system plays a pivotal role in shielding individuals from the adverse effects of stress, specifically safeguarding their mental health. Its multifaceted impact extends to actively mitigating stress, fostering an upsurge in self-assurance, and instigating a noticeable improvement in emotional well-being and mood. This network doesn't merely offer solace; it actively empowers individuals, creating an environment conducive to resilience and mental fortitude amid challenging work situations.(De

Choudhury & De, 2014; Nolas et al., 2020; Saltzman et al., 2020)

The Effect of Work-Life Balance on Mental Health

A good balance between work and personal life allows individuals to allocate equal time and attention in both these areas. This can reduce work stress and allow time for regeneration and recovery. Good balance can reduce fatigue, increase life satisfaction, and reduce stress and anxiety. Achieving a harmonious equilibrium between professional obligations and personal life empowers individuals to allocate time and attention equitably to both domains. This equilibrium serves as a powerful antidote to work-related stress, providing essential intervals for rejuvenation and recuperation. A well-struck balance not only curtails exhaustion but also augments overall life satisfaction by reducing stress and anxiety levels. It acts as a catalyst, nurturing a sense of well-being and contentment while fostering resilience in navigating life's demands. This equilibrium isn't just about time management; it's a pivotal factor in cultivating a fulfilling and sustainable lifestyle, bolstering mental and emotional resilience against the strains of work-related pressures(Badri et al., 2023; John et al., 2020; Kotera et al., 2020)

The Effect of Job Stress on Employee Performance

Continuous stress can interfere with concentration, impair decision-making accuracy, and reduce productivity. This can lead to decreased overall performance. High pressure can impact high levels of absenteeism, reduced productivity, and less-than-optimal performance. Persistent stress poses a significant threat to concentration, decision-making abilities, and overall productivity. Its persistent presence can disrupt focus, impair the accuracy of decision-making processes, and inevitably diminish productivity levels. This downward spiral ultimately culminates in reduced overall performance within a professional setting. Heightened pressure creates an environment conducive to increased absenteeism, decreased productivity, and subpar performance, ultimately undermining the efficiency and effectiveness of individuals within the workspac(Hoboubi et al., 2017; Yeniaras & Kaya, 2022)

The Effect of Social Support on Employee Performance

Social support from the work environment can increase motivation, self-confidence, and employee engagement and performance. Employees who feel supported tend to have higher job satisfaction, better productivity, and more optimal performance. The presence of robust social support within the workplace acts as a catalyst, boosting motivation, self-assurance, and overall engagement among employees. When individuals feel supported in their professional environment, it significantly elevates their job satisfaction, thereby fostering heightened productivity and optimal performance. This support network doesn't just serve as a morale booster; it cultivates an environment where employees feel valued and empowered, resulting in a palpable enhancement in their commitment, enthusiasm, and output within the organization. (Feeney & Collins, 2015)

The Effect of Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance

Employees who balance work and personal life are more emotionally satisfied, have higher energy levels, and can focus better at work. A good balance can increase motivation and consistency and strengthen employee engagement, which in turn has a positive impact on their performance. Achieving a harmonious equilibrium between work and personal life yields substantial benefits for employees. Those who strike this balance tend to experience heightened emotional satisfaction, elevated energy levels, and improved focus in their professional endeavors. This equilibrium not only enhances their emotional well-being but also bolsters their motivation, consistency, and overall engagement within the workplace. As a result, these individuals are better positioned to deliver consistent, high-quality performance, thereby positively impacting the organization's overall productivity and success. (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Johari et al., 2018)

The Influence of Work Stress on Employee Performance is Mediated by Mental Health

High work stress can reduce employee mental health. Mental health disorders, such as anxiety or depression, can affect focus, motivation, and consistency of performance. Work stress that impacts mental health tends to decrease performance because employees may experience difficulty managing tasks and dealing with work pressure. Indeed, high levels of

work-induced stress can severely compromise employee mental health. Conditions like anxiety or depression resulting from this stress significantly impede an individual's ability to maintain focus, motivation, and consistent performance. The toll on mental health often translates into challenges in managing tasks and coping with work pressure effectively. Consequently, these difficulties can manifest as decreased performance levels among employees, as they grapple with the effects of stress on their mental well-being, hindering their capacity to meet work demands and perform optimally. (Yu et al., 2021)

The Influence of Social Support on Employee Performance is Mediated by Mental Health.

Good social support can protect against mental health problems. This can strengthen emotional stability and mental health, contributing to better performance. Adequate social support can help employees manage stress, which in turn improves their mental health and results in better performance. Robust social support serves as a powerful shield against mental health issues, fortifying emotional stability and overall mental well-being. This heightened emotional resilience directly contributes to improved performance within the workplace. Adequate social support mechanisms empower employees to navigate and manage stress effectively, leading to enhanced mental health. This positive correlation between social support, stress management, mental health, and subsequent improved performance underscores the pivotal role of a supportive social environment in fostering employee well-being and productivity. (Harandi et al., 2017; Zhang, 2017)

RESEARCH METHOD

This research adopted a quantitative approach, employing specific sampling and measurement techniques for data collection. The study involved office employees based in Pekanbaru City who held permanent positions for a minimum of five years. The sample size was determined to be 200 respondents, and data collection relied on a questionnaire designed to gather pertinent information. The gathered data was then analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM PLS), a statistical technique

utilized for examining relationships between variables and assessing complex interrelationships within a given model.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Convergent Validity Test

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	AVE
Job Stress	SK1	0.864	0.796
	SK2	0.915	
	SK3	0.918	
	SK4	0.884	
	SK5	0.877	
Social Support	DS1	0.886	0.796
	DS2	0.886	
	DS3	0.935	
	DS4	0.862	
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	0.869	0.792
	WLB2	0.884	
	WLB3	0.883	
	WLB4	0.923	
Mental health	KM1	0.849	0.775
	KM2	0.936	
	KM3	0.852	
Employee performance	K1	0.805	0.681
	K2	0.911	
	K3	0.729	
	K4	0.837	
	K5	0.903	
	K6	0.748	

Source: data processing results, 2023

Convergent validity assesses the validity of reflective indicators as a measure of latent variables, as evidenced by the loading factor for each indicator variable and the AVE value for each variable or dimension. The arrow was considered reliable if the loading factor value was more significant than 0.70 and the AVE was greater than 0.5. According to the table above, the hands for each concept have strong convergent validity values, specifically all above 0.70 and AVE values greater than 0.5. This outcome indicates that the indicator has strong convergent validity.

Table 2 Discriminant Validity Test

Indicator	Job Stress	Social Support	Work-Life Balance	Mental health	Perform
SK1	0.864	-0.475	-0.503	-0.486	-0.544
SK2	0.915	-0.605	-0.590	-0.568	-0.620
SK3	0.918	-0.576	-0.571	-0.589	-0.605
SK4	0.884	-0.502	-0.524	-0.518	-0.563
SK5	0.877	-0.524	-0.563	-0.553	-0.587
DS1	-0.523	0.886	0.619	0.614	0.612
DS2	-0.510	0.886	0.613	0.596	0.636
DS3	-0.560	0.935	0.666	0.587	0.624
DS4	-0.560	0.862	0.620	0.597	0.658
WLB1	-0.544	0.627	0.869	0.613	0.675
WLB2	-0.526	0.626	0.884	0.634	0.685
WLB3	-0.561	0.632	0.883	0.632	0.696
WLB4	-0.569	0.628	0.923	0.630	0.661
KM1	-0.530	0.584	0.567	0.849	0.696
KM2	-0.616	0.633	0.712	0.936	0.768
KM3	-0.456	0.552	0.573	0.852	0.686
K1	-0.517	0.526	0.603	0.679	0.805
K2	-0.551	0.670	0.690	0.720	0.911
K3	-0.536	0.545	0.580	0.610	0.729
K4	-0.551	0.559	0.634	0.666	0.837
K5	-0.574	0.670	0.699	0.716	0.903
K6	-0.517	0.528	0.562	0.638	0.748

Source: data processing results, 2023

Discriminant validity was a measure of validity that compares the correlation of construct indicators to other constructs as evaluated by cross-loading values. If a construct indicator's correlation was more significant than the correlation of that indicator with other constructs. The loading factor value for each indication of each latent variable has the maximum relevance when compared to the loading value of other latent variables, according to the table above. As a result, each latent variable has a high level of discriminant validity.

Table 3 Square Root Of Average (AVE) Validity Test

Variable	Job Stress	Social Support	Work-Life Balance	Mental health	Performance
Job Stress	0.892				
Social Support	-0.604	0.892			
Work-Life Balance	-0.618	0.706	0.890		
Mental health	-0.610	0.671	0.705	0.880	
Performance	-0.656	0.710	0.764	0.815	0.825

Source: data processing results, 2023

The Fornell-Larcker approach, which compares the square roots of the AVE with latent vertical correlation, was another method for measuring discriminant validity. Discriminant validity was good if the square root of the AVE along the diagonal line was more significant than the correlation between the two constructs. According to the table above, the fair root value of AVE along the diagonal line has a higher correlation between one construct and another, implying that the construct has excellent validity.

Table 4 Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Decision
Job Stress	0.936	0.951	Reliable
Social Support	0.914	0.940	Reliable
Work-Life Balance	0.912	0.938	Reliable
Mental health	0.853	0.911	Reliable
Performance	0.904	0.927	Reliable

Source: data processing results, 2023

The composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values of the indicator block that assesses the construct were examined during the reliability test. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were more significant than 0.7 in the table above, indicating that all constructs in the calculated model match the criteria (reliable).

Table 5 Determination Test (R Square)

Dependent Variable	R2	R2 Adjusted
Mental health	0.581	0.575
Performance	0.757	0.752

Source: data processing results, 2023

For mental health, the corrected R2 value was 0.575. This suggests that work stress, social support, and work-life balance influence 57.5% of mental health. The fixed R2 performance was then calculated to be 0.752. This suggests that work stress, social support, work-life balance, and mental health influence 75.2% of performance.

Table 6 Size Effect (f2)

Influence	f2	Criteria
Work Stress -> Mental Health	0.058	Small
Social Support -> Mental Health	0.083	Small
Work-Life Balance -> Mental Health	0.154	Currently
Job Stress -> Performance	0.037	Small
Social support -> Performance	0.033	Small
Work-Life Balance -> Performance	0.109	Small
Mental Health -> Performance	0.361	Big

Source: data processing results, 2023

Table 7 Relevance of predictions (Q2)

Dependent Variable	Q ² Predict
Mental health	0.568
Performance	0.657

Source: data processing results, 2023

The table above shows that the Q2 value of the mental health variable was 0.568, and performance was 0.657 > 0. This means that this research model has a good observation value.

Table 8 Direct Hypothesis Testing

Influence	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values
Work Stress -> Mental Health	-0.207	3,087	0.002
Social Support -> Mental Health	0.276	3,612	0,000
Work-Life Balance -> Mental Health	0.382	5,914	0,000
Job Stress -> Performance	-0.131	2,472	0.013
Social support -> Performance	0.139	2,414	0.016
Work-Life Balance -> Performance	0.263	4,302	0,000
Mental Health -> Performance	0.457	7,422	0,000

Source: data processing results, 2023

1. Work Stress -> Mental Health

The obtained coefficient value was -0.207, with t-statistics of 3.087 and a P value of 0.002. These findings indicate that the t statistic (3,087) was more significant than the t table (1.96) and that the P value (0.002) was less than 0.05. As a result, it can be regarded as work stress, which harms mental health. Mental health will decline by 0.207 for every unit increase in work stress, providing all other variables remain constant.

2. Social Support -> Mental Health

The obtained coefficient value was 0.276, with a t-statistic of 3.612 and a P value 0.000. These findings indicate that the t statistic (3,612) is bigger than the t table (1.96) and that the P value (0.000) was less than 0.05. As a result, it might be viewed as social support, which significantly impacts mental health. If all other variables remain constant, every unit increase in social support increases mental health by 0.876, and vice versa.

3. Work-Life Balance -> Mental Health

The resulting coefficient value was 0.382, with t-statistics of 5.914 and a P value 0.000. These findings

indicate that the t statistic (5,914) was more significant than the t table (1.96) and that the P value (0.000) was less than 0.05. As a result, work-life balance has a substantial impact on mental health. Every unit increase in work-life balance improves mental health by 0.382, provided all other variables remain constant.

4. Job Stress -> Performance

The obtained coefficient value was -0.131, with t-statistics of 2,472 and a P value of 0.013. These findings indicate that the t statistic (2,472) was more significant than the t table (1.96) and that the P value (0.013) was less than 0.05. As a result, it can be regarded as having a significant impact on performance. Assuming all other variables remain constant, every unit increase in work stress reduces performance by 0.131.

5. Social support -> Performance

The obtained coefficient value was 0.139, with a t-statistic of 2,414 and a P value of 0.016. These findings indicate that the t statistic (2,414) was more significant than the t table (1.96) and that the P value (0.016) was less than 0.05. As a result, social support has a substantial impact on performance. If all other variables remain constant, every unit increase in social support increases performance by 0.139.

6. Work-Life Balance -> Performance

With t-statistics of 4,302 and a P value 0.000, the obtained coefficient value was 0.263. According to these findings, the t statistic (4,302) was more than the t table (1.96), and the P value (0.000) was less than 0.05. As a result, work-life balance has a significant impact on performance. If all other variables stay constant, every unit increase in work-life balance corresponds to a 0.263 rise in performance.

7. Mental Health -> Performance

The estimated coefficient value was 0.457, with t-statistics of 7,422 and a P value 0.000. These findings indicate that the t statistic (7,422) is bigger than the t table (1.96) and that the P value (0.000) was less than 0.05. As a result, it was possible to perceive it as a significant mental health effect on performance. Every unit gain in mental health leads to a 0.457 increase in performance, providing all other variables remain constant.

Table 9 Indirect Hypothesis Testing

Influence	Path Coefficient	Q Statistics	P Values
Job Stress -> Mental Health -> Performance	-0.095	2,630	0.009
Social Support -> Mental Health -> Performance	0.126	3,799	0,000
Work-Life Balance -> Mental Health -> Performance	0.175	4,239	0,000

Source: data processing results, 2023

8. Job Stress -> Mental Health -> Performance

The coefficient value obtained was -0.095 with calculated t-statistics of 2,630 and a P value of 0.009. These results show that the t-statistic (2.630) was more significant than the t table (1.96), or the P value (0.009) is smaller than 0.05. Thus, it can be interpreted as work stress, which significantly affects performance through mental health. Any increase in work stress mediated by mental health by 1 unit will reduce performance by 0.095 and vice versa, assuming other variables were constant.

9. Social Support -> Mental Health -> Performance

The calculated coefficient value was 0.126, with an estimated t-statistics of 3,799 and a P value 0.000. These findings indicate that the t-statistic (3.799) was more significant than the t-table (1.96) and that the P value (0.000) was less than 0.05. As a result, it might be viewed as social support, which has a substantial impact on performance via mental health. Any increase in social support mediated by the mental health of one unit increases performance by 0.126, provided all other variables remain constant.

10. Work-Life Balance -> Mental Health -> Performance

The measured coefficient value was 0.175, with calculated t-statistics of 4,239 and a P value 0.000. These findings indicate that the t-statistic (4,239) was more significant than the t table (1.96) or that the P value (0.000) was less than 0.05. As a result, work-life balance significantly impacts performance via mental

health. Any work-life balance increase mediated by one mental health unit increases performance by 0.175, provided all other variables remain constant.

CONCLUSIONS

Findings from several studies confirm that work stress has an effect on mental health, which can lead to problems such as anxiety, depression, and other negative impacts. Effective stress management strategies in the work environment were essential to supporting employee mental health. In addition, solid social support and work-life life balance have also been shown to influence mental health. This imbalance can have a negative impact, lowering energy and focus and even affecting overall performance. Research also shows that work stress not only affects mental health but also impacts employee performance. High-stress levels can reduce productivity and work quality, while social support and work-life life balance can improve performance. In addition, the relationship between mental health and performance was also significant. Good mental health can improve overall performance, while excessive stress without attention to mental well-being can result in a decline in mental health that negatively impacts long-term performance. Thus, managing stress, strengthening social support, and creating work-life balance not only improves employees' mental health but also significantly impacts their performance in the work environment.

The cumulative findings across multiple studies strongly affirm the correlation between work-related stress and its profound impact on mental health. This connection often leads to detrimental outcomes, including heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and various other adverse effects. It is evidently clear that implementing effective stress management techniques within the workplace setting is imperative for bolstering employee mental well-being. Moreover, the presence of robust social support systems and the establishment of a healthy work-life balance have emerged as pivotal factors influencing mental health. The absence of such equilibrium can precipitate adverse consequences, depleting an individual's energy reserves, diminishing their focus, and subsequently

undermining overall performance. Compelling research further underscores that work-induced stress doesn't solely compromise mental health but also exerts a tangible impact on employee performance. Elevated stress levels are known to curtail productivity and diminish the quality of work delivered. Conversely, the provision of social support networks and the maintenance of a balanced work-life structure have been proven to enhance overall performance. Furthermore, the intricate relationship between mental health and performance is undeniably significant. Optimal mental health serves as a catalyst for improved performance, while unmitigated stress, when disregarding mental well-being, can precipitate a decline in mental health, consequently exerting a detrimental influence on long-term performance. Hence, it is evident that the effective management of stress, the fortification of social support systems, and the cultivation of a harmonious work-life balance not only foster enhanced mental health among employees but also wield a profound and tangible impact on their performance within the professional sphere.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Limitations of this research could encompass several aspects, such as the exclusive focus on office employees in Pekanbaru City, which might limit the generalizability of findings to broader contexts or diverse work environments. Additionally, the reliance on a questionnaire for data collection might introduce response biases or limitations in capturing nuanced perspectives. The study's emphasis on a specific tenure requirement of at least five years could potentially overlook insights from employees with shorter job durations.

Further research could explore several avenues to augment this study. Firstly, investigating the impact of interventions or specific support programs aimed at reducing work stress and enhancing mental health among employees could be valuable. Exploring additional variables or moderating factors that might influence the relationship between work stress, social support, work-life balance, and employee performance could deepen our understanding. Furthermore, conducting longitudinal studies to observe how these

factors evolve over time and their prolonged effects on employees' well-being and performance could provide valuable insights for organizations aiming to support their workforce more effectively.

RECOMENDED

Building an Environment that Supports Mental Health, Performance, and Work-life Balance: Holistic Stress Management Program: Implement a comprehensive stress management program in the workplace, including time management training, relaxation techniques, and an integrated mental health program to reduce the impact of work stress. Encourage Solid Social Support: Focus on an inclusive and collaborative work culture, promoting social interaction, mentoring, and experience-sharing platforms to strengthen social support among colleagues. Supported Work-life Balance: Through policies that allow schedule flexibility, working remotely, and promoting boundaries between work and personal time, companies help employees maintain this balance to support their mental health and performance

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