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The Role of Work Motivation as a Mediator on The Influence of Job Stress on Employee Performance

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This research aims to determine the influence that job stress has on employee performance, with a focus on the importance of work motivation. The study conducted will explain the relationship between job stress and performance directly and indirectly, namely through motivation as a mediating variable using quantitative methodology. The research population was 126 employees of the Regional Civil Service Agency of South Sulawesi Province. The researcher used a saturated sampling technique, so that the entire population would be sampled. In the process of responding to the hypothesis through a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) study carried out with the help of Smart PLS version 4 software. The research findings explain that the job stress has an insignificant effect on performance, but has a significant effect on work motivation. Other results prove that there is a significant relationship between work motivation and performance, and work motivation is able to act as a mediator in increasing the influence of job stress on performance to be significant.

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1.   INTRODUCTION

The Legal Law Number 5 Year 2014 on State Civil Apparatus, the Law explains that State Civil Apparatus, hereinafter abbreviated as ASN, is a profession for civil servants and government employees with work agreements who work in government agencies. In the current era of globalization, government administration both at the center and in the regions is required to be able to work efficiently and effectively, in this case every employee is expected to be able to work professionally in accordance with the demands of their work so that organizational goals can be achieved. The Regional Civil Service Agency of South Sulawesi Province is one of the Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) within the scope of the South Sulawesi Provincial Government, which is precisely located in the eastern part of Indonesia. This government agency is a development of a previously existing civil service agency. Based on the results of observations and interviews with the Head of the South Sulawesi provincial civil service agency, it shows that employee performance is still relatively low, this can be seen from the large number of employees who are not able to follow work rules within the agency, such as employees often arriving late to work, using rest time. which is not in accordance with the rules and there are still employees who often leave work not at the specified time and there are employees who often leave the office and do not return, then the work that is the employee's workload is sometimes entirely borne by honorary employees even though the work is able to be completed without having

to be charged to other employees. This fact is relevant to the high workload which causes employees to experience work stress. To avoid this, many employees do not work professionally and delegate their work to other employees. Apart from that, employee motivation tends to be relatively low, as can be seen from their lack of activity in providing solutions to problems. or obstacles that exist within the agency in question in terms of discipline regarding the rules within the agency.

The above phenomenon explains that human resource management still needs to be improved, because without superior and competent human resources, organizational goals will be difficult to achieve. This is in accordance with expert statements which explain that human resources (HR) are a central factor in an organization (Sumanto, 2020). Whatever the form and purpose, organizations are founded based on various visions for the benefit of humans and in implementing their missions they are also managed and managed by humans, so that humans are a strategic factor in organizational activities. Another expert's view also explains that good human resources in a field of work will be determined by their level of competence, professionalism and commitment in carrying out the tasks that have been given to them (Wira, 2022). Therefore, basically the success of an organization is greatly influenced by the performance of individuals whether they work in companies or government agencies.

The definition of performance has been interpreted by several experts, one of which is Mangkunegara (2017:89), performance is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out functions in accordance with the responsibilities given to him. In general, there are two factors that influence performance, namely factors that come from within and outside a person (Sultan, 2021). This statement is also strengthened by the theory put forward by Robbins in Ridho (2022) which explains that individual performance is an interaction between ability (A), motivation (M) and opportunity (O), performance $= f (A \times M \times O)$ In this research, the ability (A) in employees is reflected through the agency's ability to reduce the work stress experienced by employees so that it does not become too high which will have an impact on reducing the performance achieved by employees as well as the employee's ability to overcome the work stress experienced, then motivation (M) and opportunity (O), are things that must be paid attention to, where agencies are expected to be able to create high motivation in their employees by providing opportunities to develop or improve their careers which of course will have an impact on performance achievement.

Motivation is seen as a factor that will influence performance, where employees who have high motivation will of course be responsible for every job assigned to them and complete the work as expected. This theory explains that work stress and motivation are factors that need to be considered in improving performance, work changes in agencies can produce work stress and changes in motivation in employees. Recently, the phenomenon of employee performance in terms of work stress and motivation has occurred in many agencies, both at the central and regional levels. Several previous researchers have proven the results of previous research regarding the relationship between these variables that work stress and motivation can improve performance (Dethan et al., 2023; Harahap, 2023; Lotu et al., 2022; Umar, 2022), although there are still different findings that work stress and motivation do not have a significant influence (Bahri, 2019; Ridwan et al., 2023)

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Work Performance

Every organization or company will always try to improve the performance of its employees, with the hope that the objectives of the establishment of the agency will be achieved. Performance is a form of work that is produced well as a whole during a certain period in completing tasks compared to possibilities, such as standard work results, targets or goals and criteria that have been determined and have been mutually agreed upon (Marlius, 2022). Another expert's view explains that performance is the result of work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties in accordance with the responsibilities given to him (Mangkunegara, 2017). High and low employee performance can be measured by indicators of work quality, punctuality, initiative, ability and communication (Adji, 2022)

2.2. Job Stress

Job stress is something that is perceived by the individual himself, so employee work stress levels can vary. Stress that is perceived negatively can cause negative effects both physically and mentally. If the stress experienced affects the mental condition, changes will appear in the individual's feelings, thoughts and behavior (Pardede, 2020). Expert views explain that work stress is a tense state that affects a person's emotions, thoughts and physical condition, which ultimately affects the employee's ability to deal with the environment and work (Harahap, 2023). Another view explains that work stress is a feeling of pressure experienced by employees in facing work, this can be seen from symptoms, including unstable emotions, feelings of unease, likes to be alone, difficulty sleeping, excessive smoking, unable to relax, anxious, tense, nervous, increased blood pressure, and experiencing digestive disorders (Mangkunegara, 2017). Previous researchers concluded that work stress that is relatively low in a person will influence his work results to be higher, which means that

there is a significant influence of work stress on performance (Lotu et al., 2022). Apart from that, work stress is also related to the level of motivation, where employees who experience high work stress due to excessive workload will certainly reduce work motivation (Ridwan et al., 2023). Based on this, the research hypothesis is:

H_1: Job stress has a significant effect on employee performance

H_2: Job stress has a significant effect on work motivation

2.3. Work Motivation

Motivation is considered important because with work motivation it is hoped that every employee will be able to work hard and be enthusiastic to achieve high work productivity. Expert views explain that motivation Motivation is defined as a condition in a person's personality that drives the individual's desire to carry out certain activities in order to achieve a goal (Syah, 2022), The high and low levels of motivation in this research adopted Sultan (2021) measurements, namely the need for self-actualization, the need for self-esteem, social needs, the need for safety and security, and physiological needs. Previous findings confirm that there is a significant relationship between motivation and performance (Dethan et al., 2023). Apart from that, other research explains that high motivation in employees will be able to increase the influence of work stress on performance significantly (Sugiarto, 2020). Based on this, the research hypothesis is:

H_3: Work motivation has a significant effect on employee performance

H_4: Job stress has a significant effect on employee performance through work motivation

3. METHODOLOGY

This form of research is exploratory research, namely where the researcher does things such as distributing questionnaires and interviews to collect data, then the collected data is processed using the SemPLS Version 4 analysis tool to answer the research hypothesis. The research population is 126 employees who work at the Regional Civil Service Agency of South Sulawesi Province, using a saturated sampling technique.

4. RESULTS

Measurement models (Outer Model)
Convergent validity

This test aims to provide an explanation of the extent to which measurement indicators are positively correlated with alternative measurements of the construct. An indicator is said to have a good valid value if the loading factor value => 0.70 and the average variance inflation factor (AVE) value must be greater than 0.5 (Ghozali, 2021). Test result:

Tabel 1. Convergent validity (Model 1)

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	*Average Variance Extracted* (AVE)	conclusion
Stress	STR1	0.805	0.529	Invalid
	STR2	0.788		
	STR3	0.809		
	STR4	0.649		
	STR5	0.549		
Motivation	Mot 1	0.823	0.709	Valid
	Mot 2	0.768		
	Mot 3	0.837		
	Mot 4	0.888		
	Mot 5	0.888		
Performance	Perform 1	0.795	0.776	Valid
	Perform 2	0.833		
	Perform 3	0.868		
	Perform 4	0.928		
	Perform 5	0.968		

Table 1 shows that work stress consists of five indicators, namely STR1 to STR5, two indicators were found that did not meet the test requirements < 0.70 (STR4 and STR5), so they had to be excluded from modeling. For the motivation variable using five measurement indicators, namely Mot1 to Mot5, all indicators on this variable have an acceptable loading value because the measurement value obtained is > 0.70, while performance which has five indicators (Perform 1 to Perform 5) is proven to have a loanding value of > 0.70, which means that no indicators should be excluded from the model. Because there are several indicators in the

variables that do not meet the testing standards, a second model test is carried out. The results of model 2 are as follows:

Tabel 2. Convergent validity (Model 2)

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	*Average Variance Extracted* (AVE)	conclusion
Stress	STR1	0.844	0.700	Valid
	STR2	0.825		
	STR3	0.841		
Motivation	Mot 1	0.822	0.709	Valid
	Mot 2	0.770		
	Mot 3	0.838		
	Mot 4	0.888		
	Mot 5	0.888		
Performance	Perform 1	0.796	0.776	Valid
	Perform 2	0.833		
	Perform 3	0.868		
	Perform 4	0.928		
	Perform 5	0.968		

Table 2 is the result of testing convergent validity model 2, where in the previous model a measure was found that did not meet the required validity so it had to be removed from the test. In testing model 2, it shows that there are no indicators for variables that have a loading value < 0.70, so it can be continued in the next test.

Diskriminant Validity

This test assesses whether the indicators of a variable are valid or not. The assumption underlying good discriminant validity is that the square of the variable's AVE root value is greater than the correlation between other constructs. Therefore, the variable is considered to meet this criterion.

Tabel 3. Diskriminant validity

Variabel	Performance	Motivation	Stress
Performance	**0.881***		
Motivation	0.825	**0.842***	
Stress	0.517	0.584	**0.837***

The results obtained from the table above show that the AVE root value of the performance variable is 0.881 which is marked with (*) which is greater than the AVE value of the variables in the column below. Motivation has the root AVE = 0.842 which has the symbol (*) which is greater than the value in the same column and row, and the AVE value of work stress is 0.837 which has the symbol (*) which is not smaller than the value of the variable in the same row. So this explains that discriminant validity is met.

Composite Reliability

The purpose of this test is to assess whether the variables contained in the modeling have consistency in measuring what you want to measure or have acceptable reliability. These results are explained in the following table.

Tabel 4. Composite Reliability

Construct	*Cronbach's alpha*	(rho_a)	*Composite reliability*	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Performance	0.926	0.932	0.945	0.776
Motivation	0.897	0.898	0.924	0.709
Stress	0.786	0.790	0.875	0.700

In table 4, it can be concluded that the job stress has a composite reliability value = 0.875, the work motivation variable has a value = 0.924, while the performance variable has a value = 0.945. These results prove that all variables have a composite reliability value of > 0.70, then the Cronbach's alpha value for each variable is > 0.70. so that Composite reliability testing based on two criteria is fulfilled in this research.

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)
R-Square

R-Square value is used to explain how much endogenous variable data can be explained by exogenous variable data. R-Square is a number that ranges from 0 to 1, with the condition that the closer to one the better. Ghozali (2021) view explains that the r-square value is 0.75 (strong), 0.50 (moderate), and 0.25 (weak)

Tabel 5. R-Square

Effect	R-square	R-square adjusted
Motivation	0.341	0.335
Performance	0.682	0.677

Table 5, the R-square value for motivation is = 0.341, this value shows that the model in this research is in the weak category. This shows that the motivation variable is influenced by work stress by 34.1% and the remaining 65.9% is influenced by variables that were not included in the research. Meanwhile, performance shows an r-square value of 0.682, this value indicates that the resulting influence is in the moderate category, and explains that work stress and motivation have an influence of 68.2% on the performance variable. These results can be explained in more detail in the following by the figure:
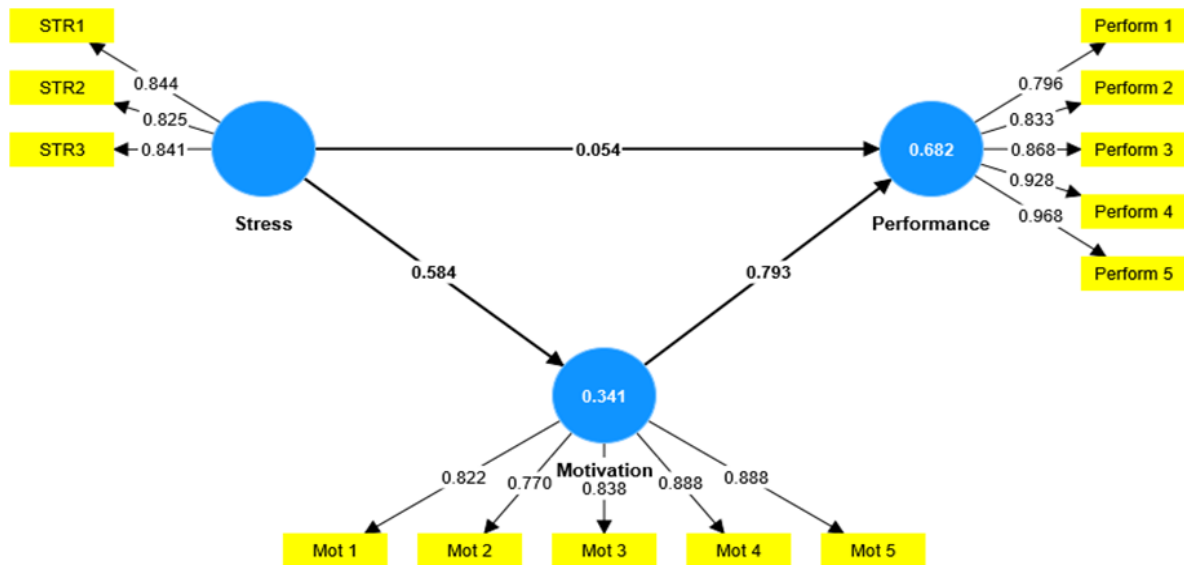

Figure 1. Structural Model (First Model)

Q-Square Test

The purpose of testing is to explain how well the model can predict changes that occur in endogenous variables. This test value is divided into three levels > 0 low, > 0.25 medium, and > 0.50 high (Ghozali, 2021). Test results are as follows:

Tabel 6. R-Square

Effect	Q²predict	RMSE	MAE
Performance	0.239	0.885	0.639
Motivation	0.314	0.841	0.629

The results in the table show that the Q-squared value of performance is 0.239, this shows that the accuracy of the model in predicting changes in performance variables is relatively low. Meanwhile, for the

motivation variable, the Q-squared value = 0.314. This value indicates that the model's ability to predict changes in motivation variables is classified as moderate.

Goodness of Fit (GOF)

This test aims to analyze the model as a whole whether the model is fit well or not. The expert's view explains that in SEM, if the GOF (Goodness of Fit) test has been fulfilled then automatically (implied) the simultaneous/structural model is fit. Therefore, SEM analysis does not require hypothesis testing simultaneously or simultaneously with the F test because it has been replaced by the GOF test (Haryono, 2016). A model is said to have good fit if the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value is < 0.10 and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value is closer to 1 (Ghozali, 2021). The test results can be seen in the following table:

Tabel 7. R-Square

Model	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.099	0.099
d_ULS	0.895	0.895
d_G	1.203	1.203
Chi-square	704.186	704.186
NFI	0.622	0.622

Based on the test results in the table above, it shows that the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value is 0.09 < 0.10 and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value is 0.622 which is close to 1, so it can be concluded that the GOF (Goodness Of Fit) test in the research This is fulfilled, which means that the model built is suitable as a whole (fit) or together all the independent variables have a simultaneous effect on the dependent variable.

Hypothesis Testing

Proving the hypothesis using SmartPLS vers 4 was carried out using the Bootstrapping technique. When carrying out the Bootstrapping technique, the output value of the inner model will be produced, where the results provide an explanation of the relationship between variables and an explanation of the hypothesis made in the research. If the figure obtained is T statistic = > 1.96 at the sig 0.05 level, then the variable is considered to contribute significantly to the variable it influences. There are two stages in hypothesis testing: testing direct effects (direct influence) and indirect effects (indirect influence). The results of hypothesis testing will be explained in table 8 and the research model output can be explained in figure 2.
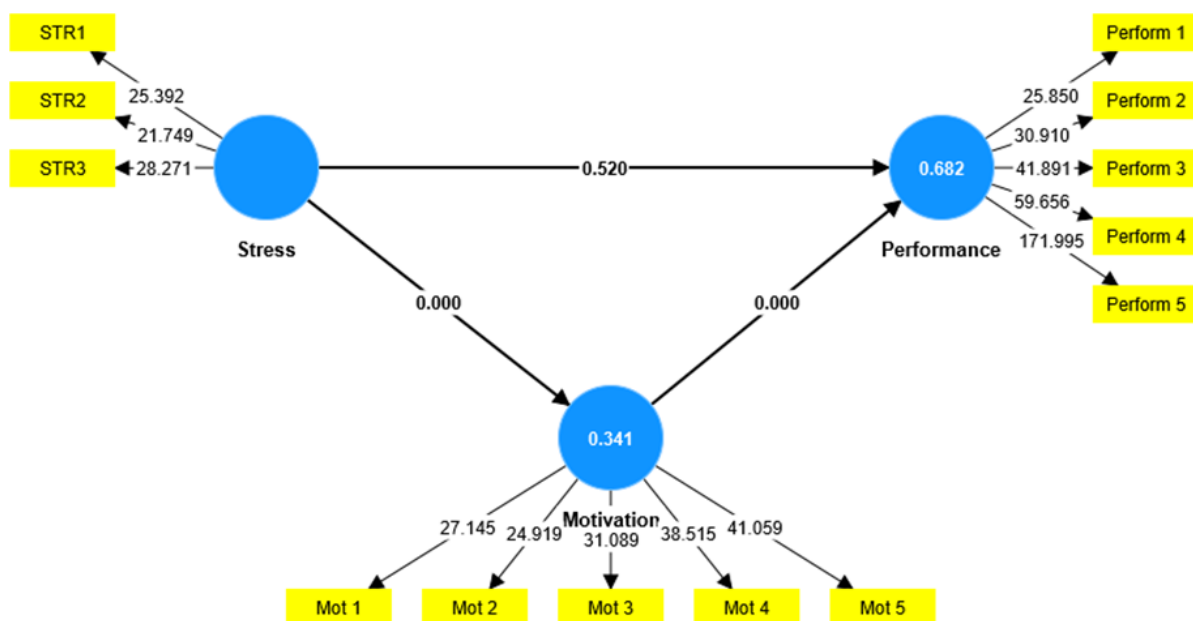

Figure 2. Structural Model (Final Model)

Tabel 8. Path Coefficients

Effects	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Motivation -> Performance	0.793	0.788	0.077	10.319	0.000
Stress -> Performance	0.054	0.060	0.084	0.643	0.520
Stress -> Motivation	0.584	0.590	0.102	5.740	0.000
Stres -> Mot-> Perform	0.463	0.463	0.080	5.767	0.000

5. DISCUSSION

Testing the Job Stress (STR) hypothesis on Performance provides evidence that the resulting influence is not significant with t-statistics = 0.643 < 1.96 at sig 0.520. This value provides an explanation that in the process of improving employee performance, it is necessary to control the level of work stress so that it does not become too high, which means that performance will not increase if employees experience high work stress. These results are in line with previous research that work stress has a positive and insignificant influence on employee performance (Ridwan et al., 2023), However, this is different from other findings which explain that work stress has a positive and significant influence on employee performance (Lotu et al., 2022).

The test results provide evidence that work motivation has a positive and significant influence on performance, with t-statistics values = 10,319 > 1.96 and sig 0.00. This proves that increased performance can be achieved with high motivation in employees. Apart from that, these results also explain that the higher the motivation in employees, the more significant it will be in creating high performance. The findings are supported by previous findings that high performance increases are created by providing high motivation (Umar, 2022)

The t-statistics value obtained for the relationship between STR and Mot is = 5,740 > 1.96 and sig 0.00, thus these results prove that the relationship formed is significant. This explains that a high increase in motivation can be achieved due to work stress, this can happen if the agency always gives awards to employees who are able to demonstrate high work performance, such as providing opportunities for promotion to higher positions and so on. This research is in line with the findings (Mahaputra, 2020), that work stress experienced by employees has a positive and significant effect on motivation. However, it is different from other findings that Pardede (2020), that there is a negative and significant relationship between work stress and work motivation

The mediation relationship is proven by obtaining a t-statistics value = 5,767 > 1.96 and sig 0.00, this value proves that motivation is able to be a perfect mediating variable in increasing the influence of work stress on performance to be significant, which means that work stress is able to improve performance if it is supported by the presence of high motivation in employees. The research results are in line with previous researchers that motivation plays a mediating role in increasing the influence of work stress on performance to a significant level (Mahaputra, 2020; Sugiarto, 2020)

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and interpretation, it explains that there is no significant correlation between work stress variables and performance, while motivation has a significant relationship in increasing performance, then the direct influence on motivation provides evidence that work stress has a significant correlation. The role of motivation as a mediating variable provides evidence that explains that work stress has a significant effect on performance if it is supported by the provision of high motivation. This explains that motivation in this research is able to be a perfect mediator in increasing the influence of work stress on performance in a significant direction. The research results provide an explanation that with high motivation, performance creation in the agency can be achieved even though the level of work stress due to excessive workload is relatively high, therefore employee motivation must be a priority scale that must be paid attention to by every organization.

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