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The Role of Perceived Organizational Support in Moderating The Relationship between Work Stress and Employee Performance

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the effect of work stress on frontline employee performance, the effect of perceived organizational support on frontline employee performance, and the role of perceived organizational support in moderating the relationship between work stress and frontline employee performance. The research method used in this study was an explanatory survey. Data were collected from a sample of 106 frontline employees of Banking Institutions in Kupang City. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling. Path analysis was conducted using SmartPLS. The results of this study indicate that work stress negatively affects frontline employee performance, perceived organizational support positively affects frontline employee performance, and perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between work stress and frontline employee performance. The interaction between perceived organizational support and work stress positively affects employee performance. Perceptions of high organizational support by employees will cause work stress to decrease, thereby increasing employee performance, and conversely, if perceptions of low organizational support by employees will cause work stress to increase, thus decreasing employee performance.

1. Introduction

One aspect of human resources within banking institutions is frontline employees (customer service and tellers). Frontline employees serve as the face of the company, serving as the first people

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to interact directly with customers and responsible for handling them. Frontline employees are also tasked with assisting and providing a positive experience for customers. As frontline employees, frontliners are required to effectively provide information on the bank's products and services to customers or potential customers. They are also required to be reliable salespeople, maintaining and enhancing customer relationships and fostering long-term relationships with them to support the company's operational continuity and success.

Operational continuity and company success are crucially determined by the exemplary performance of frontline employees. High or low employee performance is determined by numerous factors. One factor influencing employee performance is work stress. Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between stress and employee performance, including those by Abu Al Rub and Fawzi (2004); Hsiow-Ling Hsieh et al. (2004); Oi-ling Siu (2010); Jamal (2011); Nasrin & Hojat (2013); Ratnawat and Jha (2014); Mai Ngoc Khuong and Vu Hai Yen (2016); Schwepker et al. (2021); Nien-Te Kuo et al. (2022). Their research findings indicate that job stress negatively impacts employee performance. Higher levels of job stress can reduce employee performance.

Yerkes and Dodson (1908) also explained the relationship between stress and job performance. Low levels of stress enhance performance, but higher levels of stress decrease employee performance. In other words, performance increases with increased physiological or psychological arousal, but only up to a certain point. If arousal levels are too high, performance will suffer. Therefore, it is crucial for business organizations to identify their employees' work stress levels and mitigate them to improve their performance.

Based on the above illustration, management must be able to identify the work stress levels of frontline employees and mitigate them to improve their performance. To reduce work stress and improve employee performance, researchers attempted to utilize perceived organizational support as a moderator. This was done to examine whether perceived organizational support could play a role in reducing work stress levels and improving frontline employee performance.

2. Materials and Methods

According to Savery and Luks (2001), work stress can be conceptualized as an individual's reaction when confronted with characteristics of the work environment that appear and threaten him. Gill, Flaschner, and Shachar (2006) state that work stress is a mental and physical condition that directly and negatively affects an individual's productivity, effectiveness, personal health, and quality of work. Several indicators of work stress are put forward by Greenberg and Baron (2003), including: (1) work-related relationships, (2) occupational demands, (3) role conflict, (4) role ambiquity, (5) overload and underload, (6) responsibility for others, (7) lack of social support from coworkers, (8) lack of participation in decision-making. Eisenberger and Rhoades (2001) state that perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' perceptions of the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Eisenberger et al. (2011) state that employees perceive their work as a reciprocal relationship, reflecting a relative dependence that transcends formal contracts with their organization. Furthermore, Eisenberger et al. (2011) and Boateng et al. (2014) state that several indicators can be used to measure the extent to which employees perceive organizational support, including caring, support, and appreciation from leadership, as well as working conditions.

Performance, meanwhile, is the form of work produced by an individual (Robbins & Judge, 2015). Another definition states that performance is what employees do and do not do, including work quality, quantity, timeliness, supervision, and cost efficiency (Langton, Robbins, and Judge, 2013). To

measure employee performance, the indicators proposed by Mathis & Jackson (2017) are used, including: 1) quantity of work results, 2) quality of work results, 3) timeliness of work results, 4) presence at work, and 5) ability to work together.

Hypothesis Development

Job stress is an individual's reaction when the individual is faced with characteristics of the work environment that appear and threaten him (Savery and Luks, 2001). When an employee is in an organization where the relationship between employees is not good at work, high task/job demands, high role conflict, role ambiguity, excessive workload, great responsibility to others or subordinates, lack of social support from coworkers, and lack of participation in decision making will have an impact on suboptimal performance.

Gill, Flaschner, and Shachar (2006) said that Job stress is a mental and physical condition, which directly and negatively affects the productivity, effectiveness, personal health, and quality of individual work. Several previous studies that examine the effect of job stress on employee performance, among others, were conducted by; Choo, Freddie. (1986); AbuAlRub, Raeda Fawzi. (2004); Hsiow-Ling Hsieh, Liang-Chih Huang & Kuo-Jen Su. (2004); Jamal, Muhammad. (2007); Oi-ling Siu, (2010); Jamal, Muhammad. (2011); Nasrin Arshadi and Hojat Damiri, (2013); Ratnawat, R.G. and Jha, P.C. (2014); Mai Ngoc Khuong and Vu Hai Yen, (2016); Schwepker Jr., Charles H., and Christina K. Dimitriou. (2021); Nien-Te Kuo, Lu-Ping Lin, Kuo-Chien Chang, and Yi-Sung Cheng. (2022). The results of their research indicate that work stress negatively affects employee performance. Higher levels of work stress experienced by employees can reduce employee performance. These results align with the inverted-U model (Yerkes and Dodson's Law, 1908), which explains the relationship between stress and work performance. Low levels of stress will improve performance, but higher levels of stress will decrease employee performance. *Hypothesis 1: The work stress experienced by employees affects their performance.*

Perceived organizational support reflects the extent to which an organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Employees assume that their work is reciprocally related to their organization. When employees perceive positive organizational support, they are more likely to perform optimally. Several previous studies on the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee performance were conducted by Riggle et al. (2009), Arshadi and Hayayi (2013), Guan et al. (2014), and Chen et al. (2020). Their results indicate that employee perceptions of organizational support can improve employee performance. *Hypothesis 2: Employees' perceptions of organizational support influence employee performance.*

Employees assume that their work is reciprocally related to their organization. When employees perceive positive organizational support, their stress levels decrease. When employees feel supported by the organization, they feel they have the resources to cope with work pressures within the organization. This will impact their performance, which will increase. Vroom et al. (2015) stated that employees are motivated to contribute to the organization when they believe their efforts will result in desired rewards. Demerouti and Bakker (2011) stated that balancing job demands and the resources employees receive from the organization is key to optimal performance. *Hypothesis 3: Perceived organizational support acts as a moderator in the relationship between work stress and employee performance.*

Research Method

The research method used in this study was an explanatory survey. An explanatory survey method seeks to clarify the relationships between variables in a study. Its purpose is to verify the relationships between variables by conducting hypothesis testing through statistical data processing

and testing (Nazir, 2000). To answer the research questions and objectives, a multivariate analysis tool, Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA), was used, using the intelligent PLS statistical application.

The population in this study was frontline banking employees in Kupang City. The exact number of employees was unknown. Therefore, the minimum sample size was determined using the Cochran formula (Sugiyono, 2019), which was 106 employees. Simple random sampling was used to determine the research sample.

Work stress was measured using indicators proposed by Greenberg and Baron (2003), including: (1) work-related relationships, (2) occupational demands, (3) role conflict, (4) role ambiquity, and (5) job stress. excess and/or lack of workload (overload and underload), (6). responsibility for others, (7). lack of social support from coworkers (Lack of social support), (8). lack of participation in decision making (Lack of participation in decision). To measure employee performance, indicators are used as proposed by Mathis & Jackson (2017), including: 1) quantity of work results, 2) quality of work results, 3) timeliness of work results, 4) presence at work, and 5) ability to work together. Measurement of perceptions of organizational support uses indicators proposed by Eisenberger, et al (1990) and Boateng (2014), including: concern, leadership support and appreciation as well as working conditions. All statement items use a 5-point Likert Scale from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

3. Results and Discussions

Data analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS involves a two-stage evaluation process: the assessment of the measurement (outer) model and the structural (inner) model. First, the outer model is evaluated to determine the psychometric properties of the scales, specifically their validity and reliability. This assessment is based on several key metrics, including indicator loading factors, Cronbach's Alpha (CA), Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Additionally, multicollinearity among indicators is monitored through the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). As shown in Table 1, the measurement model satisfies all established criteria, confirming that the constructs are both reliable and valid for further analysis. Subsequently, the structural (inner) model is assessed to evaluate the hypothesized relationships between latent variables and the model's predictive power. This is primarily determined by examining the R^2 (coefficient of determination) values. Furthermore, the Path Coefficients (β) are analyzed to identify the strength, direction, and significance of the relationships between constructs, providing a comprehensive understanding of the interplay within the proposed structural framework.

Table 1. Evaluation Recapitulation *Outer Model*

Variable	VIF	Loading Factor	CA	CR	AVE
Job Stress (X)			0,882	0,904	0,541
JS1	1,770	0,767			
JS2	2,433	0,792			
JS3	2,070	0,764			
JS4	3,092	0,709			
JS5	3,903	0,786			
JS6	2,998	0,731			

JS7	2,309	0,782			
JS8	3,115	0,743			
Perceived Organizational Support (Z)			0,724	0,779	0,569
POS1	1,201	0,793			
POS2	1,203	0,753			
POS3	1,264	0,778			
POS4	1,316	0,714			
Job Performance (Y)			0,789	0,853	0,539
JP1	1,895	0,784			
JP2	2,617	0,787			
JP3	1,449	0,759			
JP4	2,069	0,731			
JP5	2,474	0,799			
Job Stress * Perceived organizational support	1,000	0,857	1,000	1,000	1,000

The evaluation of the structural model, or inner model, aims to predict the relationships between latent variables. The inner model is evaluated by examining the R-square value. Data processing results indicate that the R-square for employee performance is 0.272, indicating that the performance of frontline employees at banking institutions in Kupang City is influenced by work stress, perceived organizational support, and the interaction between work stress and perceived organizational support. 27.2% of the performance is influenced by other factors, while 72.8% is influenced by other factors.

The path coefficient values, or the magnitude of the relationship or influence of the latent constructs, the nature of the influence, and the interplay between the construct variables in the constructed structural model, is seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Summary of Path Coefficient Evaluation

Relationship between Variables	Path Coefficient Value *(p)*	Mark
1. Job Stress dan Job Performance	-0,254	0.001
2. Perceived organizational support dan Job Performance	0,385	0,000
3. Job Stress * Perceived organizational support dan Job Performance	0,227	0,011

Based on the table above, it can be seen that all paths forming the structural model in this study show positive and negative influences and are significant ($p < 0.05$). The contribution of influence between the variables forming these paths is indicated by the Path Coefficient value.

The Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance

The results of the study indicate that work stress experienced by employees has a negative and significant impact on the performance of frontline employees (see table 2). If frontline employees of banking institutions in Kupang City experience uncomfortable work relationships, heavy task/work demands, role conflict, role ambiguity, excessive or insufficient workload, large responsibilities to others or subordinates, lack of social support from coworkers, lack of participation in decision-making will have a negative impact on their performance, in terms of quantity and quality, completing work late, poor attendance at work, and lack of ability to work together with other employees. On the other hand, if employees experience comfortable work relationships, task/work demands that are not burdensome, there is no role conflict, have role clarity, workloads that are appropriate to their abilities, have clear responsibilities to others or subordinates, social support from coworkers, participation in decision-making will have an impact on improving employee performance. The results of this study are in line with the results of research conducted by AbuAlRub and Fawzi (2004); Hsiow-Ling Hsieh et.al. (2004); Oi-ling Siu (2010); Jamal (2011); Nasrin & Hojat (2013); Ratnawat and Jha (2014); Mai Ngoc Khuong and Vu Hai Yen, (2016); Schwepker et.al. (2021); Nien-Te Kuoet.al. (2022). The results of their research indicate that work stress negatively affects employee performance. The higher the level of work stress experienced by employees, the lower their performance.

The Influence of Perceived Organizational Support on Employee Performance

The results of the study indicate that the perception of support provided by the organization to its employees will have a positive and significant impact on employee performance (see table 2). If frontline employees of banking institutions in Kupang City have a good perception of the support provided by the organization to them in terms of concern, support from leaders, giving awards for employee achievements and comfortable working conditions in the organization, then the ability of employees to do their work optimally both in quantity and quality, complete work on time, high attendance at work, and have the ability to work together with other employees. The results of this study support the research conducted by Riggle et al (2009), Arshadi and Hayayi (2013), Guan et al (2014), and Chen, et al (2020). The results of their research obtained indicate that employee perceptions of the support provided by the organization to its employees can improve employee performance.

The Role of Perceived Organizational Support in Moderating the Relationship Between Job Stress and Employee Performance

The research results indicate that perceived organizational support for its employees can act as a mediator in the relationship between work stress and employee performance. The interaction between perceived organizational support and work stress influences employee performance. The research results also indicate that the interaction between perceived organizational support and work stress has a positive effect on employee performance. High perceptions of organizational support by employees will lead to decreased work stress, thereby improving employee performance. Conversely, low perceptions of organizational support will lead to increased work stress, thus impacting employee performance.

Supporting the research findings was also expressed by Vroom et al. (2015), who stated that employees are motivated to contribute to the organization when they believe their efforts will yield

desired rewards. When they experience intense work pressure but receive significant support from the organization, employees will be motivated to contribute optimally to the organization. A similar view was expressed by Demerouti and Bakker (2011), who stated that balancing job demands and the resources employees receive from the organization is key to optimal performance.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion of the data in this study, the following conclusions can be drawn, namely; 1) Job stress has a negative effect on the performance of frontline employees. High job stress can decrease employee performance, and conversely, low levels of job stress can increase their performance. 2) Perceived organizational support has a positive effect on the performance of frontline employees. The better the employee's perception of organizational support provided to employees will improve their performance. and 3) Perceived organizational support plays a role in moderating the relationship between job stress and frontline employee performance. The interaction between Perceived organizational support and job stress has a positive effect on employee performance. High perceptions of organizational support will cause their job stress to decrease and will have an impact on improving their performance, and conversely, if the employee's perception of organizational support is low, it will cause work stress to increase and will have an impact on decreasing their performance.

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