

Improving Employee Performance Through Work Stress and Workload with Social Support as a Moderating Variable at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City

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Abstract. *Work stress in the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) environment has become a serious concern in various countries, including Indonesia. ASN has a crucial role in running the wheels of government and providing optimal public services to the community. High job demands, great responsibilities, and complex workloads make them vulnerable to experiencing stress at work. If not handled properly, work stress can impact various aspects of employee life, from mental and physical health to decreased work productivity. This study uses a quantitative research method with a case study approach. According to Sugiyono (2013), quantitative research is a research method used to examine a specific population or sample using quantitative data collection techniques and analyzed statistically. Workload has a negative and significant effect on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City. Social Support moderates the effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City. Social Support does not moderate the effect of Workload on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City.*

Keywords: *Employee; Performance; Regional; Secretariat.*

I. 1. Introduction

In the modern workplace, the complexity of employee duties and responsibilities is increasing along with the dynamics of organizational development. The Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City (SETDA Kota Tangsel), as a regional government agency, plays a strategic role in assisting the Mayor in policy formulation, coordination between regional agencies, and administrative services. The broad scope of work and high intensity of tasks require employees in the SETDA Kota Tangsel environment to work under time pressure and considerable responsibilities. If not managed properly, this condition has the potential to cause excessive workloads and work stress that can affect employee mental balance and productivity. If not handled appropriately, this can negatively impact individual and institutional performance as a whole.

Employee performance is one of the main indicators of an organization's success in achieving its goals. According to Widodo and Yandi (2022), employee performance can be influenced by various factors such as motivation, competence, and compensation. Augustine, Sunaryo, and Firmansyah (2022) emphasize that job satisfaction also plays a significant role in achieving optimal performance. In the context of public organizations such as the Regional Secretariat (SETDA), improving employee performance is not only oriented towards individual output but also the quality of public services provided. Therefore, it is crucial to identify and manage factors that directly and indirectly influence performance, including workload and job stress.

One of the main challenges that can hinder optimal performance is work stress. According to Trirahayu and Hendratni (2023), work stress arises when individuals perceive work demands as exceeding their abilities or resources. Makkira et al. (2022) explain that stress at certain levels can boost performance, but excessive stress can actually decrease productivity. Batubara and Abadi (2022) found that stress Work stress can mediate the relationship between workload and employee performance. Furthermore, other factors such as social support have also been shown to play a significant role. Pasaribu, Lumbanraja, and Rini (2021) showed that social support has a positive influence on performance by reducing workload-induced burnout. Therefore, in the context of the South Tangerang City Regional Secretariat (SETDA), it is important to further examine how work stress and workload affect employee performance and the role of social support as a moderating variable that can strengthen or weaken this influence.

Occupational stress within the State Civil Service (ASN) has become a serious concern in various countries, including Indonesia. ASN play a crucial role in running the government and providing optimal public services to the community. High job demands, significant responsibilities, and complex workloads make them vulnerable to stress at work. If not managed properly, occupational stress can impact various aspects of employee life, from mental and physical health to decreased work productivity. Several studies have shown that prolonged work stress can negatively impact various aspects of employee performance, ranging from decreased work quality, increased absenteeism, to the emergence of physical and mental health disorders.

Setiawan and Makaginsar (2025) found that work stress experienced by nurses, especially in shift work systems, can lead to absenteeism and decreased work readiness, which ultimately affects the quality of healthcare services. Syahrir (2024) also stated that unmanaged work stress can trigger work errors and even endanger safety, as in the case of air traffic controllers (ATC) who experience high psychosocial stress. Furthermore, Amelya, Pratiwi, and Rahmadania (2024) highlighted that prolonged stress not only reduces productivity but also increases the risk of burnout and mental health disorders. Therefore, it is important for organizations to understand and manage work stress appropriately to maintain employee performance and well-being sustainably.

Thus, the novelty offered by this study is the introduction of social support as a moderating

variable in the relationship between work stress, workload, and employee performance in local government environments, particularly in the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City. Unlike previous studies that generally separate these variables, this study proposes that social support is not only a factor that directly supports performance but also plays a significant role in moderating the influence of stress and workload on employee performance.

2. Research Methods

This research uses a quantitative research method with a case study approach. According to Sugiyono (2013), quantitative research is a research method used to examine a specific population or sample using quantitative data collection techniques and statistical analysis. The case study in this research focuses on employees at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City, with the aim of determining the effect of work stress and workload on employee performance and the role of social support as a moderating variable. The quantitative method was chosen because it can provide an objective picture of the correlation between the variables studied. Thus, the results of this study can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence employee performance in government organizations, particularly at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City.

3. Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistical analysis is a statistical technique/procedure that allows researchers to organize, summarize, and describe observational results. The research instrument uses a Likert scale with the following scale ranges:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (STS)
- 2 = Disagree (TS)
- 3 = Neutral (N)
- 4 = Agree (S)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (SS)

Data in the form of respondents' answers to each item in the questionnaire will be processed, the frequency of responses will be determined, presented as a percentage, and then described. Two aspects will be highlighted in the descriptive analysis. The descriptive analysis of the research variables will examine the item criteria derived from the indicators of each research variable. This analysis will be conducted for all items in the research instrument. The item criteria are as follows:

- a. SB (Very Good) : > 80% - 100%
- b. B (Good) : > 60% - 80%

- c. CB (Good Enough) : > 40% - 60%
- d. TB (Not Good) : > 20% - 40%
- e. STB (Very Bad) : < 20%

The measurement model test (outer model) is conducted to measure the relationship between variables/constructs and their indicators or descriptors. This test examines the validity and reliability of the construct's descriptors or indicators. Within the measurement model, validity and reliability tests are conducted. Validity tests use convergent and discriminant validity tests, while reliability tests use Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability.

Convergent validity testing is conducted in two ways. First, by looking at the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. The AVE value must be above 0.50. Second, by looking at the loading factor value. Ideally, the loading factor value should be above 0.70. However, statement items with loading factor values between 0.60 and 0.70 can be retained and declared valid if the AVE value is above 0.50. To test the convergent validity and significance of each indicator in the research construct, the bootstrapping method was used in SmartPLS 4. Indicator validity was determined through the outer loading value (≥ 0.70), T-statistic (≥ 1.96), and P-value (≤ 0.05). The following table presents the bootstrapping results, which show how strongly each indicator represents its construct:

Table Outer Loading, T-Statistic, and P-Value for Each Indicator

Variables	Indicator	Outer Loading	T-Statistic	P-Value
Work Stress	SK1	0.844	19,390	0.000
	SK2	0.868	26,431	0.000
	SK3	0.866	20,521	0.000
Workload	BK1	0.793	12,959	0.000
	BK2	0.871	20,694	0.000
	BK3	0.861	16,826	0.000
Social Support	DS1	0.828	20,145	0.000
	DS2	0.840	18,057	0.000
	DS3	0.821	16,608	0.000
	DS4	0.861	19,419	0.000
Employee performance	KK1	0.814	18,186	0.000
	KK2	0.833	24,785	0.000
	KK3	0.869	29,197	0.000
	KK4	0.870	26,518	0.000

Source: SmartPLS 4 (2024)

Based on the bootstrapping results, all indicators have outer loading values above 0.7, T-statistics above 1.96, and P-values < 0.05 . This indicates that all indicators are statistically significant and have good convergent validity in measuring their respective constructs. Therefore, the instruments used in this study can be declared valid and reliable. The following are the AVE values for each variable:

Table Results of Convergent Validity Test with Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	Average Variance Extracted(AVE)
Job Stress (X1)	0.783
Workload (X2)	0.760
Social Support (Z)	0.749
Company Performance (Y)	0.942

Source: SmartPLS 4 (2024)

The results of the convergent validity test using AVE indicate that all variables in this study have an AVE above 0.50. This means that the research variables have met the requirements for the convergent validity test.

The inner model test, or structural model test, aims to estimate the relationships between constructs within a research model. In this study, the inner model test will be conducted by calculating the VIF and R-Square values.

1) Multicollinearity Test Results

The multicollinearity test was conducted by evaluating the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) value. The following are the results of the multicollinearity test.

Table Inner Collinearity Statistic (VIF) Values

Variables	Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) Employee Performance (Y)
Workload (X2)	1,044
Social Support (Z)	1,157
Job Stress (X1)	1,049
Social Support (Z) x Job Stress (X1)	1,109
Social Support (Z) x Workload (X2)	1,039

Source: SmartPLS 4 (2024)

A good VIF value is below 10.00. The multicollinearity test results for the relationship between the study variables were below 10.00. This indicates that the relationship between the exogenous variables is not strong or that multicollinearity does not occur.

2) Model Fit Test Results

The following are the results of the model fit test using the R-square value. R-square is a measure of the proportion of variation in the value of an endogenous variable due to an exogenous variable. The R-square value improves as it approaches 1 or 100%.

Table of Determination Coefficients

Variables	R-square
Employee Performance (Y)	0.892

Source: SmartPLS 4 (2025)

The R-square value of 0.892 indicates that approximately 89.2% of the variation in Financial Performance can be explained by the model or independent variables used in the analysis.

This indicates that the model has a fairly good ability to explain the variability in Employee Performance.

1) Hypothesis Testing

The following are the results of hypothesis testing in this study:

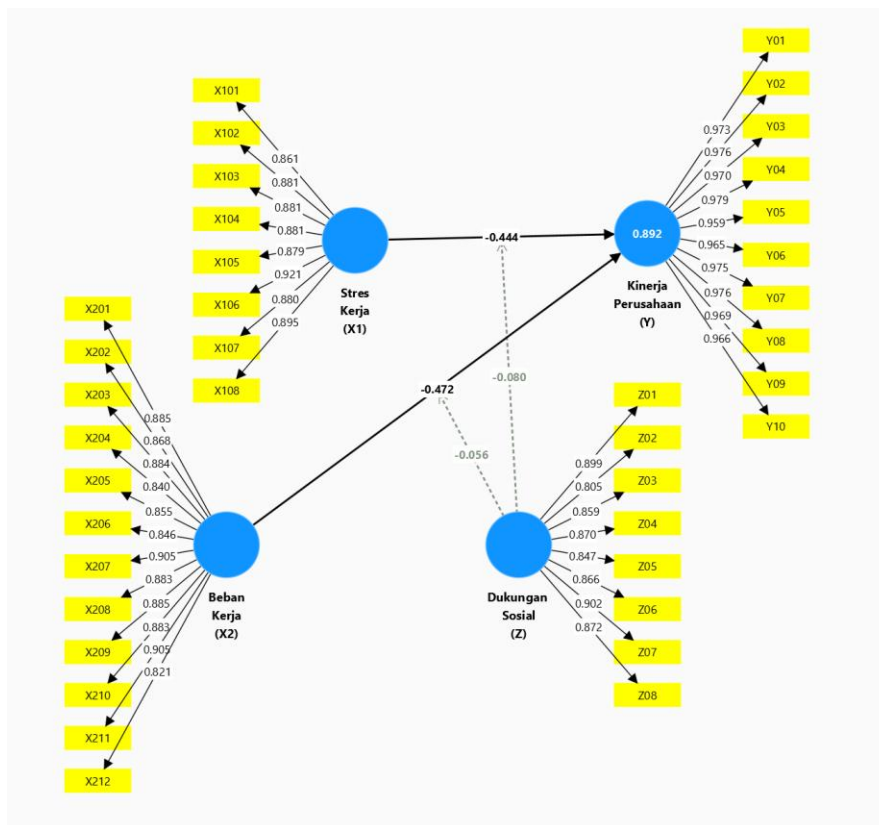


Figure Path Analysis Hypothesis Test Results

Source: SmartPLS 4 (2024)

The conditions for decision making are:

- If the significance value is < 0.05 ; then the hypothesis is accepted, which means there is an influence. which is significant between variables.
- If the significance value > 0.05 , then the hypothesis is rejected, meaning there is no significant influence between the variables.

Table Hypothesis Testing Results

Code	Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	P-Values	Information
H1	Work stress has a negative and significant effect on employee	-0.444	0.000	Accepted

	performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City.			
H2	Workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City.	-0.472	0.000	Accepted
H3	Social Support Moderates the Influence of Work Stress on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City	-0.080	0.044	Accepted
H4	Social Support moderates the influence of Workload on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City.	-0.056	0.140	Rejected

Source: SmartPLS 4 (2025)

The table shows the results of the analysis of the influence of work stress and workload on employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City, as well as the moderating role of social support. The first hypothesis (H1) states that work stress has a negative and significant influence on employee performance, with a sample value of -0.444 and a P-value of 0.000, thus accepted. The second hypothesis (H2) shows that workload also has a negative and significant influence on employee performance, with a sample value of -0.472 and a P-value of 0.000, which is also accepted. The third hypothesis (H3) states that social support moderates the influence of work stress on employee performance, with a sample value of -0.080 and a P-value of 0.044, thus accepted. However, the fourth hypothesis (H4) which states that social support moderates the influence of workload on employee performance is not accepted, with a sample value of -0.056 and a P-value of 0.140. This indicates that social support plays a role in reducing the negative impact of work stress, but is not significant in moderating workload.

Discussion:

In this section, we will explain the discussion regarding the findings of the hypotheses in this study as follows:

1) The Influence of Work Stress on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City

Job stress is a significant factor in determining employee performance, especially in the technology sector, which is known for its high work demands. In today's increasingly connected and competitive world, employees in the technology sector are often faced with workloads that are not only heavy but also complex. Research shows that job stress can negatively impact employee productivity and job satisfaction. In the context of the South Tangerang City Regional Secretariat, data analysis shows a significant negative relationship between job stress and employee performance, with a sample value of -0.444 and a P-value

of 0.000. This indicates that the higher the level of stress experienced by employees, the lower the resulting performance.

The results of this study indicate that work stress, characterized by high levels of role conflict, task ambiguity, and excessive responsibility, negatively impacts employee performance. This finding aligns with research by Indriani & Widodo (2020), which states that role conflict and job ambiguity are the main triggers of work stress and contribute to the decline in performance of public sector employees. This study also strengthens the theory of Robbins & Judge (2017), which states that chronic work stress leads to decreased concentration, burnout, and suboptimal performance. The three indicators in this model (SK1–SK3) have been confirmed valid through bootstrapping and align with the conceptual construction of work stress in previous studies.

In large technology companies in Indonesia, employees often face tight deadlines and pressure to meet ambitious targets. This situation creates a highly demanding work environment, where employees feel pressured to consistently deliver the best results within a limited timeframe. Prolonged stress can lead to mental and physical exhaustion, which in turn reduces work effectiveness. When employees feel trapped in a constant cycle of stress, the creativity and innovation that should be the driving force of the technology industry begin to suffer. This is not only detrimental to the individual but can also impact the entire team and company.

It's important to consider individual factors that can influence an employee's response to stress, such as work experience, social support, and stress management skills. Employees with more work experience may have a better understanding of how to manage stress, while those new to the workforce may feel more stressed due to their lack of experience. On the other hand, social support from coworkers and superiors also plays a significant role in reducing stress levels. When employees feel supported, they are more likely to share the workload and overcome challenges. Stress management skills are also key, as individuals who have the ability to face and resolve stress constructively can minimize its negative impact on performance. Therefore, companies need to provide adequate training and resources to help employees manage their stress.

Furthermore, companies need to create a supportive and stress-reducing work environment. Implementing flexible work policies, such as flexible working hours or remote work options, can help employees balance their personal and professional lives. Employee wellness programs, including activities like yoga, meditation, or psychological counseling, can also be an effective way to reduce stress. By providing facilities that support mental and physical health, companies not only demonstrate concern for employee well-being but also invest in long-term productivity.

2) The Influence of Workload on Employee Performance in Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City

Workload is a crucial factor that significantly contributes to employee performance, particularly in the technology industry, which is often characterized by high demands. In this context, workload encompasses not only the number of tasks to be completed but also the complexity and level of responsibility an employee assumes. Existing research indicates that excessive workload can lead to a drastic decline in performance and job satisfaction. The analysis results indicate that workload has a significant negative effect on employee performance, with a sample value of -0.472 and a P-value of 0.000. This suggests that the higher the workload, the lower the expected employee performance.

The negative impact of workload on employee performance was consistently found in this study. Workloads that include a large number of tasks (BK1), target pressure (BK2), and limited completion time (BK3) reduce employee effectiveness. This finding aligns with a study by Karasek (1979) using the Job Demand-Control model, which states that high work demands without adequate control will cause stress and hinder productivity. Research by Astuti & Nugroho (2021) also supports these results, stating that work overload impacts work errors and low job satisfaction. Therefore, the BK1–BK3 indicators in this model are not only statistically significant but also conceptually valid compared to previous studies.

In Indonesia, particularly in the technology sector, many employees report feeling overwhelmed by increasing tasks and demands for rapid innovation. Over the past two years, many employees in this sector have experienced increased workloads, impacting not only their productivity but also their mental health. Excessive workloads not only reduce performance but can also trigger serious health issues, such as depression and anxiety. This creates a vicious cycle where perceived pressure leads to decreased productivity, which in turn increases stress further.

It's important to note that workload isn't just about the number of tasks to be completed, but also the complexity and level of responsibility an employee assumes. A high workload, especially when accompanied by complex demands, can lead to higher levels of stress and a significant decline in performance. Those tasked with completing multiple projects simultaneously under tight deadlines will experience significantly greater pressure than those with a more organized and structured workload. Therefore, companies need to evaluate and adjust employee workloads to align with their capacities and skills. This will not only improve performance but also maintain employee mental health.

Furthermore, sound management strategies can help address workload overload. One effective approach is to more evenly distribute tasks among teams. By distributing the workload equitably, companies can reduce the pressure felt by individuals, thus creating a more balanced work environment. The use of technology can also contribute to increased work efficiency. Implementing digital collaboration tools can facilitate communication and coordination between teams, thereby reducing the time required to complete tasks and

reducing the overall workload.

3) The Role of Social Support in Moderating the Correlation between Work Stress and Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City

Social support is considered a crucial factor in mitigating the negative impact of work stress on employee performance. In an increasingly competitive and stressful workplace, the importance of social support cannot be overlooked. The analysis shows that social support can moderate the effect of work stress on employee performance, with a sample value of -0.080 and a P-value of 0.044. This suggests that good social support can help employees cope with the stress they experience, thus maintaining optimal performance. This indicates that when employees feel supported by their social environment, whether from coworkers or superiors, they are better able to face challenges and pressures that arise in the workplace.

Social support has been shown to be an effective moderating variable in mitigating the negative effects of stress and workload on performance. Support from superiors (DS1), coworkers (DS2), open communication (DS3), and emotional support (DS4) provide psychological protection in the workplace. These findings corroborate Cohen & Wills' (1985) Buffering Hypothesis, which states that social support plays a crucial role in mitigating the impact of stress on mental health and work performance. Research by Sulistiyani (2022) and Yanti & Surya (2019) also suggests that a supportive work environment increases employee motivation and loyalty. Bootstrapping results for these four indicators demonstrate consistent significance.

In the context of the South Tangerang City Regional Secretariat, social support can come from various sources, including coworkers, superiors, and family. In companies oriented toward innovation and collaboration, social support serves as a buffer against stress. Employees with strong social networks tend to be better able to cope with the pressures they face. This is because they feel more comfortable sharing the workload and seeking assistance when facing challenges. For example, in a product development team, if an employee feels overwhelmed by their tasks, support from colleagues in sharing ideas and solutions can reduce the mental burden they feel.

The impact of social support can be seen in companies that implement mentoring programs and collaborative teams. These programs not only improve employee skills but also create a supportive environment where employees feel valued and heard. In this context, mentoring can help new employees adapt to the company culture and develop the skills necessary for success. Employees involved in teams with strong social support demonstrate higher performance than those without such support. This is also evident in increased job satisfaction and employee loyalty to the company, which in turn positively impacts productivity.

However, it's important to remember that not all forms of social support have the same effect. Inappropriate or excessive support can actually increase stress. For example, if the

support provided is too invasive or unrelated to an individual's needs, this can lead to feelings of stress or discomfort. Therefore, companies need to ensure that the social support provided is relevant and aligned with employee needs. This can be done through surveys or feedback sessions, where employees can share their needs with coworkers and management.

4) HowThe Role of Social Support in Moderating the Correlation between Workload and Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City

In contrast to the effect of social support on work stress, the analysis shows that social support does not play a significant role in moderating the effect of workload on employee performance, with a sample value of -0.056 and a P-value of 0.140. This indicates that although social support is important, it is not sufficient to overcome the negative impacts caused by high workloads. In this context, it is important to understand that social support is a crucial element for individual well-being in the workplace, but it cannot always offset the stress generated by excessive workloads.

One reason why social support is ineffective in this context may be related to the nature of the workload itself. Work overload is often structural and systemic, with factors such as company policies, time management, and task distribution contributing to the increased stress experienced by employees. In such situations, social support from coworkers or superiors may not be enough to mitigate the impact. When the workload exceeds an individual's capacity, even strong social support cannot prevent a decline in performance. This suggests that social support needs to be combined with strategic measures to address the root causes of work overload.

Technology companies employ highly demanding work models. In situations where employees are required to complete projects within a very short timeframe, the perceived pressure often increases exponentially. Social support in the form of moral encouragement or practical assistance from coworkers may not be enough to offset the stress that arises from high demands. When employees feel trapped in inadequate work situations, social support no longer serves as an effective buffer. Instead, persistent pressure can lead to mental and physical exhaustion, which in turn impacts employee productivity and creativity.

To address these challenges, companies need to consider a more holistic approach to workload management. This includes reviewing existing work processes, resetting expectations, and providing adequate resources to support employees. Companies can evaluate existing workloads with the aim of distributing tasks more equitably and realistically. Furthermore, training in time management and organizational skills can be provided to employees to help them manage their workload more efficiently.

The importance of social support in the context of work stress cannot be overstated, but it must be recognized that such support must be supported by policies and practices that promote overall employee well-being. Building a positive and supportive work culture can help create a healthier environment, but this must be balanced with efforts to reduce

excessive workload. Thus, while social support is important in the context of work stress, it is not sufficient to moderate the effect of workload on employee performance at the South Tangerang City Regional Secretariat.

While social support plays a crucial role in reducing workplace stress, it cannot stand alone in addressing the challenges posed by high workloads. Companies must take proactive steps to address the structural issues that contribute to excessive stress on employees. By integrating social support into a broader management approach, companies can create a healthier and more productive work environment, where employees feel emotionally supported and empowered to meet the demands of their work.

Employee performance in this study was measured through four main indicators: work quality, productivity, discipline, and responsibility. All indicators were proven valid and significant. This model aligns with the performance concept according to Mangkunegara (2013), which states that the main indicators of employee performance include output, time efficiency, and discipline. Previous research, such as that of Mulyadi & Rahardja (2020), also states that discipline and responsibility are important predictors in evaluating ASN performance in government agencies. Therefore, indicators KK1–KK4 are proven consistent with previous theory and research and are relevant for use in the context of government organizations.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, the conclusions in this study are as follows: Work stress has a negative and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City. Workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City. Social Support moderates the influence of Work Stress on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City. Social Support does not moderate the influence of Workload on Employee Performance at the Regional Secretariat of South Tangerang City. This research contributes to strengthening theories related to human resource management, particularly in the context of public organizations. The finding that job stress and workload negatively impact employee performance supports the theoretical framework of Robbins and Judge (2017) and the Job Demand-Control model (Karasek, 1979), which emphasizes that high work demands without adequate control and support can lead to decreased employee performance. Furthermore, the success of social support as a moderator in reducing the negative impacts of stress and workload strengthens Cohen and Wills' (1985) Buffering Hypothesis. This finding adds to the empirical evidence that social support in the workplace not only plays a direct role in performance but also significantly moderates the influence of psychological variables on work outcomes.

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