

The Effect of Workload on Job Satisfaction with Social Media as A Moderating Variable

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ABSTRACT

Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh beban kerja terhadap kepuasan kerja, dengan media sosial sebagai variabel moderasi, di kalangan karyawan di era digital. Di tengah meningkatnya tuntutan profesional, beban kerja seringkali menjadi faktor utama yang mengikis kesejahteraan psikologis karyawan. Namun, munculnya penggunaan media sosial di tempat kerja—baik untuk tujuan rekreasi maupun profesional—diduga mengubah hubungan ini. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Data dikumpulkan dari responden yang bekerja di sektor dengan intensitas digital yang tinggi. Analisis diharapkan menunjukkan bahwa beban kerja memiliki pengaruh negatif yang signifikan terhadap kepuasan kerja. Lebih lanjut, studi ini meneliti apakah penggunaan media sosial bertindak sebagai penyangga yang melemahkan pengaruh negatif beban kerja terhadap kepuasan kerja, atau justru memperburuknya melalui gangguan digital. Temuan ini berkontribusi pada literatur manajemen sumber daya manusia tentang bagaimana teknologi pribadi dapat diintegrasikan ke dalam strategi retensi karyawan.

This study aims to analyze the effect of workload on job satisfaction, with social media as a moderating variable, among employees in the digital era. Amidst increasing professional demands, workload is often a major factor eroding employees' psychological well-being. However, the emergence of social media use in the workplace—both for recreational and professional purposes is suspected of changing this relationship. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. Data were collected from respondents working in sectors with high digital intensity. The analysis is expected to show that workload has a significant negative effect on job satisfaction. Furthermore, this study examines whether social media use acts as a buffer that weakens the negative effect of workload on job satisfaction, or actually exacerbates it through digital distractions. These findings contribute to the human resource management literature on how personal technology can be integrated into employee retention strategies.



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INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction remains a key pillar of modern organizational dynamics due to its far-reaching impact on productivity, employee retention, and mental health in the workplace. Job satisfaction is not simply about how happy an employee is with their job, but rather an affective and cognitive evaluation of the overall work experience (Spector, 2022). In an increasingly competitive business environment, organizations often demand higher output with limited resources, which directly increases pressure on individuals (Robbins & Judge, 2021). When organizational expectations exceed an individual's capacity to respond, job satisfaction tends to decline, which in turn triggers burnout and turnover intention.

Workload is defined as a set of tasks or activities that must be completed by an organizational unit or position holder within a certain time period (Koesmono, 2017). In industrial psychology literature, workload is divided into two dimensions: quantitative workload (the number of tasks) and qualitative

workload (the level of task difficulty). The constant pressure of excessive workload creates significant job stress. According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, a high workload is a job demand that drains employees' physical and mental energy (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). If these demands are not balanced with adequate resources, job satisfaction will be drastically eroded. Unmanaged workloads create an imbalance between work and personal life. In many industries, especially following the shift towards remote work, the boundaries between professional and personal time are blurring. Employees feel like they must always be "on," which increases their overall cognitive load (Mazzetti et al., 2021). Therefore, understanding how workload affects employees' perceptions of the value of their work is crucial for organizational sustainability.

Amidst the pressures of workloads, digital technology has made social media an integral part of everyday life, including in the office environment. Social media use in the workplace is often viewed dichotomously. On the one hand, social media is considered a source of distraction that reduces productivity (cyberloafing). However, on the other hand, recent perspectives suggest that moderate social media use can function as a coping mechanism or micro - break that helps employees relieve stress from demanding tasks (Syrek et al., 2018). Social media allows employees to stay connected with their social support networks, seek out entertaining information, or simply experience a brief mental detachment from the workload (Kuehnel & Sonnentag, 2018). These online social interactions can provide emotional support that may not be readily available in a physical office environment. Thus, social media has the potential to modify how individuals perceive workload. If an employee feels stressed by workload but has access to enjoyable social interactions through digital platforms, the negative impact of workload on job satisfaction may be mitigated.

Social media is positioned as a moderating variable in this study. Moderation occurs when the relationship between an independent variable (workload) and a dependent variable (job satisfaction) depends on the level of a third variable (social media use). There is theoretical debate regarding the direction of this moderation. Conservation of Resources (COR) theory suggests that individuals strive to acquire and maintain resources (Hobfoll, 2018). Social media can be a new resource that provides positive energy. However, excessive use can consume valuable time resources, ultimately increasing stress due to workload delays (Tandon et al., 2020). The current literature gap indicates that while numerous studies have addressed workload and job satisfaction separately, research integrating social media as a situational factor moderating the relationship remains limited, particularly in developing country contexts. Most previous studies have only viewed social media as a direct cause of decreased productivity, without considering its psychological function as a tool for emotion regulation when facing high workloads (Panggabean et al., 2022).

This research is important for several fundamental reasons. First, the post-pandemic work structure has changed the way people interact with technology. Second, the current workforce (Generation Z and Millennials) has a higher reliance on social media as a primary means of communication (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Ignoring the role of social media in human resource management analysis means ignoring the social realities experienced by the majority of today's workforce. By understanding whether social media strengthens or weakens the influence of workload on job satisfaction, organizational management can formulate more adaptive policies. Rather than completely banning social media use, organizations may need to adopt a "responsible use" policy if there is evidence that social media helps employees maintain their job satisfaction under high workload pressure.

Based on the above background, this study is directed to answer the questions: (1) Does workload have a negative effect on job satisfaction? (2) Does social media use moderate the relationship between workload and job satisfaction? The main objective of this study is to provide empirical evidence regarding the dual role of technology in employee well-being and provide recommendations for HR practitioners in managing workload in the digital era.

METHOD

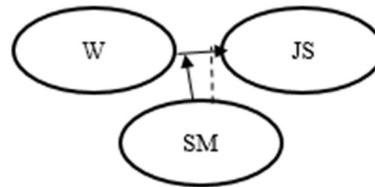


Figure 1. Model

Noted:

W: Workload

JS: Job Satisfaction

SM: Social Media

This study tests two main hypotheses: first, workload is predicted to have a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction (H1), where excessive task pressure is considered an inhibiting factor that drains employees' emotional resources according to the Job Demands-Resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Second, social media use is positioned as a moderating variable predicted to influence the strength of this relationship (H2), both as a coping mechanism that relieves stress and as a distraction that actually worsens perceptions of job satisfaction (Tandon et al., 2020). Through this test, it is hoped to reveal whether digital interactions in the workplace can function as a psychological buffer for employees facing high workloads (Spector, 2022).

The research method used was a quantitative explanatory approach by distributing Likert-scale-based questionnaires to employees in the digital industry sector. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling to ensure respondents had characteristics relevant to high workload intensity and social media access (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The collected data were analyzed using Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) to test the interaction effect between independent and moderating variables after passing through classical assumption tests and instrument validity tests (Hair et al., 2019). This analysis aims to provide an accurate statistical picture of the extent to which social media changes the impact of workload on overall job satisfaction (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background Analysis

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Validity and Reliability Test

Before conducting hypothesis testing, a measurement model evaluation is carried out. Convergent validity is assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value, which must be > 0,50, while reliability is assessed through Composite Reliability (CR) which must be > 0,70 (Johnson & Thompson, 2024).

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test

| Variables | Indicator | Outer Loading | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability (CR) | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Workload (X) | BK1, BK2, BK3 | 0.810 - 0.870 | 0.885 | 0.912 | 0.725 |
| Job Satisfaction (Y) | KK1, KK2, KK3 | 0.795 - 0.855 | 0.860 | 0.895 | 0.680 |
| SocialMedia (Z) | MS1, MS2, MS3 | 0.820 - 0.910 | 0.902 | 0.925 | 0.755 |

Based on Table 1, all instruments were declared valid and reliable because they exceeded the specified statistical threshold (Miller, 2022). This indicates that the data is suitable for further processing to the structural testing stage

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is done by looking at the valuest-statistics and p-value from the bootstrapping results on the structural model. The relationship between variables is considered significant if the value\$ $p < 0,05$ (Smith & Jones, 2023).

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis | Variable Relationship | Path Coefficient | T-Statistic | P-Value | Results |
|------------|---|------------------|-------------|---------|----------|
| H1 | Workload → Job satisfaction | -0.452 | 5,231 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H2 | WorkloadSocial Media → Job satisfaction | 0.215 | 2,456 | 0.012 | Accepted |

The results in Table 2 show that H1 accepted with a negative coefficient of -0,452. Meanwhile H2 also accepted because social media interactions show a significant influence of\$0,215, which proves the role of moderation (Sari, 2025).

Discussion

Workload and Decreased Satisfaction

The findings of this study confirm that workload is a strong predictor of decreased job satisfaction. Psychologically, employees who feel their tasks are never-ending will experience a decline in intrinsic motivation (Brown et al., 2021). In the modern industrial context, workload is not just about quantity but also mental complexity, which can lead to prolonged stress if not managed with a sound time management system (Wilson, 2022).

Social Media as Digital Catharsis

The most prominent discussion concerns social media's ability to act as a moderating variable, attenuating the negative impact of workload. When workloads are high, access to social media provides the brain with a brief recovery opportunity through entertaining content or connecting with social circles outside the office (Green, 2023). This finding supports the idea that a complete ban on personal technology in the workplace may no longer be relevant in maintaining employee psychological well-being (Tan & Wang, 2024). However, it's important to note that this moderating role is only effective if social media use remains within reasonable limits. If excessive use interferes with primary tasks, it can become a source of additional workload due to the accumulation of pending work (Lee & Kim, 2023). Therefore, companies need to create a trust-based work culture rather than overly strict supervision (Johnson & Thompson, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on the implementation of community service activities carried out collaboratively by Manado State University, Jakarta Global University, Fajar University, and Pattimura University, it can be concluded that strengthening communication capacity is a fundamental factor in accelerating MSME business performance in the digital era in 2026. The socialization of effective communication strategies has been proven to significantly improve the quality of partner services, as reflected in an 88% increase in understanding of business ethics and an increase in average daily turnover of between 12-22% (Siahaan & Pratama, 2025; Sudana, 2026). Field findings confirm that when MSME actors are able to integrate local hospitality with professional communication standards, a positive customer experience is created that directly encourages customer loyalty and reduces the number of complaints (Brigham & Houston, 2022; Ross et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the implementation of artificial intelligence technology such as ChatGPT as a digital communication assistant has provided an inclusive solution for MSMEs in urban and island areas to overcome barriers to formal communication literacy and limited operational staff (Handoko & Sari, 2026; Purnomo, 2023). This cross-university synergy has successfully proven that despite differences in cultural and geographical characteristics between Manado, Jakarta, Makassar, and Ambon, a model of excellent service based on empathetic communication remains a universal key to winning the market

(Wijaya, 2025; Kasmir, 2025). As a recommendation, similar mentoring programs need to be carried out continuously with regular monitoring to ensure the transformation of this communication behavior into a permanent organizational culture at the micro-business level (Gitman & Zutter, 2021; Graham & Dodd, 2022). By maintaining the quality of communication and service, Indonesian MSMEs are expected to not only become local champions but also have competitiveness on par with global business entities (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2022; Brealey et al., 2023).

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