

## Workload on Burnout with Work Stress as a Mediating Variable in Employees of The Assistant Economy and Development Administration

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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this study was to analyse the factors that cause employees to experience burnout at work which includes workload on burnout with work stress as a mediating variable. Burnout is an important thing that must be considered by government agencies in managing human resources. The population in this study were employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant with a sample of 100 respondents. This type of research is quantitative with the analysis method used is PLS-SEM with the help of the SmartPLS 4 programme in data processing. The results showed that workload has a positive and significant effect on burnout, workload has a positive and significant effect on work stress, work stress has a positive and significant effect on burnout, work stress has a positive and significant effect on workload through burnout. High workload can affect employees regarding work, which in turn increases the risk of burnout. In addition, high workload also contributes to increased work stress, which also plays a role in increasing the risk of burnout.

**KEYWORDS :** *Workload, Burnout, Work Stress.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is currently a major concern worldwide, mainly because of its impact on human resources in organizations. This condition can interfere with employee performance and is considered one of the most significant problems in the modern era (An et al., 2020).

Workload refers to the number of tasks that must be completed by employees within a certain period of time, utilizing their skills and potential. When the tasks assigned do not match the physical and non-physical abilities, time available, or are not in line with the employee's experience and competence, work stress can arise. This situation is often a problem related to the existing working conditions and environment (Zulmaidarleni et al., 2019).

Burnout or excessive work fatigue can be a serious problem for regional government agencies because it can affect employee performance and productivity. Some recent studies on burnout show that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem of burnout among health workers, who are under greater pressure than ever (Omar & Mohd Nasurdin, 2020).

The importance of further research is that, although much research has been done on burnout, there is still much to learn about its causal factors, impact, and more effective interventions. Therefore, further research in this area remains urgently needed.

The Economic and Development Administration Assistant has an important role in assisting the Regional Secretary in carrying out administrative tasks, coordinating the tasks of regional apparatus, formulating regional policies, and monitoring and evaluating the implementation of policies in the fields of economy, development administration, and procurement of goods and services.

Within the scope of his duties, the Regional Secretary must make important decisions in various aspects of regional government such as regional financial management, human resource development, and public services. In this case, the Economic and Development Administration Assistant can assist the Regional Secretary by providing accurate and up-to-date data and information, as well as conducting in-depth analysis and evaluation to make the right decisions.

The managerial phenomenon raised from this research is the issue of burnout in employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant. Burnout is a condition of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged work stress, which can have a negative impact on employee performance and well-being.

Based on initial observations and interviews conducted with one of the employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant, information was obtained regarding several problems experienced by employees in the agency.

Therefore, employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant are expected to work quickly and optimally, considering that they have a big responsibility in carrying out administrative tasks, coordinating the duties of regional apparatus, formulating regional policies, and monitoring and evaluating policy implementation. If this condition is allowed to drag on, with the workload continuing to increase, employees in the Economic and Development Administration Assistant are worried that they will experience burnout, especially if the workload received exceeds their capacity.

Based on the findings of previous studies, there is an illustration that there is still a research gap between the variables to be studied. Therefore, this study aims to answer and provide evidence for the research gap. Based on the above study, the researcher was encouraged to conduct research with the title "*Workload on Burnout with Work Stress as a Mediating Variable in Employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant*".

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

### Agency Theory

Workload refers to a series of tasks that need to be completed by an individual or organizational unit within a predetermined period of time. The determination of workload for employees must take into account the competencies and abilities possessed by the individual. Without considering this, problems may arise that could affect their performance in the future (Baquero, 2023).

According to Lee et al. (2024) revealed that job stress is a feeling of pressure experienced by employees in facing job demands. Symptoms of job stress are often seen through behavioral changes, such as emotional instability, anxiety, feelings of restlessness, a tendency to withdraw from social interactions, difficulty sleeping, excessive smoking, inability to relax, muscle tension, nervousness, increased blood pressure, and indigestion.

Burnout results from chronic workplace stress that cannot be managed, usually characterized by symptoms such as fatigue or decreased energy, negative or cynical feelings towards work, and adverse effects on professionalism (WHO ICD-11, 2019). In addition, burnout can also be defined as a condition in which individuals experience emotional and mental exhaustion, which often leads to physical exhaustion due to prolonged stress (Wu et al., 2023).

### Signalling Theory

The burnout measurement was adapted from Maslach and Jackson (1981). Based on the indicators put forward, the indicators used in this study refer to one of the indicators described by Baron and Greenberg who revealed that the indicators in burnout are physical fatigue, emotional fatigue, mental fatigue and low self-esteem (García-Rivera et al., 2022).

The psychological processes brought about by persistent job stress can lead to emotional exhaustion, changes in personality, and feelings of decreased achievement. (García-Rivera et al., 2022).

The indicators used by the author in this study, as stated, are in accordance with the phenomena that occur by referring to one of the indicators, namely (emotional exhaustion), where an employee doing a monotonous work routine will tend to feel bored, then because an employee must meet the targets set by the company, so that overtime occurs and this, if it happens repeatedly, will make the employee feel quite depressed by the situation, the second (physical fatigue) where work that exceeds the employee's capacity makes the employee easily tired because the work is not completed on time and employees who work too hard pay less attention to their physical health so that they experience illness, then the third (low self-esteem), where an employee feels dissatisfied with what is done and dissatisfied with self-achievement.

### Workload on Burnout

Based on stress and burnout theories, such as Karasek's Demand-Control Model and Siegrist's Effort-Reward Imbalance Model, high workloads can lead to increased stress. If the workload exceeds the individual's ability to manage the tasks, this can result in emotional exhaustion and burnout.

High workload involves not only the amount of work but also the quality and difficulty of the work.

Complex and difficult tasks often require more effort, which can increase the risk of burnout.

Previous research has shown that workers who experience heavy workloads tend to report higher levels of burnout. For example, a study conducted by Maslach and Leiter showed that high workloads can lead to significant stress and burnout among professionals.

Identifying and understanding the influence of workload on burnout is crucial to designing interventions that can help reduce the risk of burnout. Good management of workload, effective prioritization, and emotional support can help reduce the negative impact of high workload.

H1: Workload has a positive and significant effect on Burnout

#### **Workload on Work Stress**

Research shows that high workloads can contribute significantly to job stress. For example, a study by Cohen and Williamson (Baquero, 2023) showed that individuals with heavy workloads tend to experience higher stress. Similarly, research by Demerouti et al. (Üngüren et al., 2024) in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model underscores that high workload is a major driver of job stress.

In a study by Spector and Jex (Wang et al., 2024), it was found that workers with heavy workloads reported higher levels of job stress than those with lighter workloads. This is directly related to their perception of the burden they bear and their ability to cope with the demands of the job.

Understanding the impact of workload on job stress is critical to designing effective management strategies. Interventions such as better structuring of workloads, managerial support, and improved time management skills can help reduce work stress and improve employee well-being.

H2: Workload has a positive and significant effect on work stress.

#### **Work Stress on Burnout**

Research shows a significant relationship between job stress and burnout. For example, a study by Lee and Ashforth (Fastje et al., 2023) showed that workers who experience high job stress tend to report higher levels of burnout. Another study by Maslach and Leiter (Jia & Li, 2022) showed that prolonged job stress contributes directly to the development of burnout.

In a study by Schaufeli and Bakker (Claponea & Iorga, 2023) it was found that workers with high levels of job stress experienced more severe burnout. The study identified that sustained stress in the workplace contributes to increased emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

Understanding the influence of work stress on burnout is important for designing effective intervention strategies. Stress management programs, social support, and training for coping skills can help reduce the impact of work stress and prevent burnout.

H3: Work stress has a positive and significant effect on burnout.

#### **Work Stress mediates Workload on Burnout**

Research supports that job stress mediates the relationship between workload and burnout. For example, a study conducted by Bakker, Demerouti, and Euwema (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2023) showed that job stress acts as a mediator in the relationship between workload and burnout. Another study by Taris and Schaufeli (Baquero, 2023) also supported the finding that job stress mediates the relationship between workload and various dimensions of burnout.

In a study by Lee and Ashforth (Fastje et al., 2023) it was found that high workload led to greater job stress, which in turn led to higher burnout. This research suggests that job stress is an important pathway in the process of burnout development.

Understanding the role of job stress as a mediator is important for designing effective interventions. Strategies that lower workload, increase social support, and provide training for stress management can help reduce the negative impact of job stress and prevent burnout.

H4: Work stress positively and significantly mediates workload on burnout.

### **III. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a quantitative approach by looking for causal relationships. This research design is a quantitative approach explanatory research, because the approach used in this study involves analyzing and concluding data through measurements, calculations, formulas, and certainty of numerical data. Quantitative data is divided into discrete or nominal data and continuous data. Nominal data is data that can only be grouped based on separate categories, while continuous data is data that varies according to levels obtained through measurement (Sugiyono, 2019, p. 17).

This research is descriptive research because it aims to describe or describe the facts and characteristics of a particular population or region systematically, factually, and carefully (Hardani, 2020, p. 53). This research is also called associative research because it connects two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2019, p. 65).

The variables used in this study are Workload, Burnout and Work Stress.

Population is a generalization area consisting of subjects or objects with certain characteristics and qualities chosen by researchers to study in order to draw conclusions (Sugiyono, 2021). The population in this study were civil servants and non civil servants at the Economic Assistant and Development Administration, totaling 162 employees.

In this study, data analysis is conducted using Partial Least Squares (PLS). Partial Least Squares (PLS) is a component-based or variance-based model of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The analytical technique used to test the hypothesis is SEM-PLS with the help of SmartPLS 4 software, to test the relationship between variables that have been hypothesized previously.

The following data description is presented to provide an overview of the data from the distribution of questionnaires that have been carried out. The sample was obtained from employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant, the respondent data who were employees who were willing to fill in and return the questionnaire were 100 respondents.

**Table 1. Staff Assistant for Economic and Development Administration**

NO	EMPLOYEES	ASN	Non Asn	SUMMARY
1	Biro Perekonomian	20	13	33
2	Biro Administrasi dan Pembangunan	19	27	46
3	Biro Pengadaan Barang dan Jasa	46	37	83
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>162</b>

Source : Processed Data (2024)

#### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table 2. Path Coefficient**

Hipotesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
(Beban Kerja) $\square$ (Burnout)	0.473	0.474	0.079	5.997	0.000
(Beban Kerja) $\square$ (Work Stress)	0.754	0.759	0.044	17.133	0.000
(Work Stress) $\square$ (Burnout)	0.478	0.478	0.079	6.059	0.000
X $\square$ (Y) $\square$ (Z)	0.360	0.363	0.065	5.551	0.000

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output, 2024

Based on the table presented, the results of the direct effect test are interpreted as follows:

1. Workload (X) on Burnout (Y):

Based on the table above, the relationship between workload variables and burnout is significant with a T-statistic value of  $(5.997 > 1.96)$  and a p-value of  $(0.000) < 0.05$ . The estimate value is positive, namely 0.473. This shows that variable X has a positive and significant influence on variable Y.

2. Workload (X) on Work Stress (Z): Based on the table above, the relationship between workload and work stress is significant with a T-statistic value of  $(17.133 > 1.96)$  and a p-value of  $(0.000) < 0.05$ . The estimate value is positive at 0.754, This indicating that the X variable has a very strong and significant positive influence on the Z variable.

3. Work Stress (Z) on Burnout (Y):

Based on the table above, the relationship between work stress variables and burnout is significant with a T-statistic value of  $(6.059 > 1.96)$  and a p-value  $(0.000) < 0.05$ . The estimate value is positive at 0.478, This indicates that variable Z has a positive and significant influence on variable Y.

4. Work Stress (Z) mediates Workload (X) on Burnout (Y):

Based on the table above, the relationship between workload and burnout with the mediation of work stress variables shows significance with a T-statistic value of  $(5.551 > 1.96)$  and a p-value  $(0.000) < 0.05$ . The positive estimated value, which is 0.360, This indicates that variable Z acts as a mediator in the relationship between X and Y, and the effect of X on Y indirectly through Z is also significant.

All relationships (both direct and indirect) tested in this model show a significant effect, because the p-value  $< 0.05$ . This means that all paths in the model have a significant and positive impact, both directly and through mediation.

#### Discussion

In the context of the East Kalimantan Province Economic and Development Administration Assistant, this finding has important implications. By reducing employee workload, it is expected that burnout levels can be reduced. This can be done through various ways that focus on the distribution of workload in accordance with the duties and functions and abilities of employees.

The results of this study also indicate that the workload indicator is the most dominant in the mental effort variable, with the highest outer loading value of 0.838. Employees with high workloads tend to be more sensitive in identifying the early symptoms of burnout and taking the necessary actions to prevent it.

In the context of the East Kalimantan Province Economic and Development Administration Assistant, this finding has important implications. By reducing employee workload, it is expected that the level of work stress can be reduced. This can be done through various ways that focus on the distribution of workload in accordance with the duties and functions and abilities of employees.

The results of this study also show that the workload indicator is the most dominant indicator in the mental fatigue variable with the highest outer loading value of 0.871. Employees who have a high workload tend to be more sensitive in recognizing the early symptoms of work stress and taking the necessary actions to prevent it.

In the context of the East Kalimantan Province Economic and Development Administration Assistant, this finding has important implications. By reducing work stress in employees, it is expected that burnout levels can be reduced. This can be done through various ways that focus on reducing workload on employees.

The results of this study also show that the work stress indicator is the most dominant indicator in the group pressure variable with the highest outer loading value of 0.863. Employees who have high levels of work stress tend to be better able to recognize the early symptoms of burnout and take the necessary actions to prevent it.

Based on the results of data analysis, it is known that work stress can mediate the relationship between workload and burnout. This means that the high workload felt by employees directly causes prolonged stress, which in turn triggers burnout in employees at work. Government organizations should be immediately aware of the factors that cause this, to be able to evaluate employee performance and prevent problems related to work stress and workload that they experience. If this continues, it can lead to burnout behavior in employees.

The results of this study are in line with previous research conducted by Bakker, Demerouti, and Euwema (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2023), which showed that work stress acts as a mediator in the relationship between workload and burnout, with a significant positive effect.

Overall, the findings of this study provide strong evidence that workload is an important factor influencing burnout, with work stress acting as a mediating variable. This indicates that interventions aimed at reducing workload in employees can be an effective strategy to reduce burnout and work stress in employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that has been carried out regarding workload on burnout with work stress as a mediating variable in employees of the Economic Assistant and Development Administration using SmartPLS 4, the following are the conclusions of hypothesis testing that can be drawn:

1. This study proves that there is a significant positive influence between workload on burnout in employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant. The results of this study also show that the mental effort load indicator is the most dominant indicator in the workload variable. By reducing workload on employees can contribute to low levels of burnout.
2. This study shows a significant positive influence between workload and burnout on employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant. The results of this study also show that the mental fatigue indicator is the most dominant indicator in the burnout variable. By reducing workload on employees can contribute to low levels of work stress.
3. This study proves that there is a positive and significant influence between work stress and burnout in employees of the Economic and Development Administration Assistant. Overall, the results of this study also show evidence that the group pressure indicator is the most dominant indicator in the work stress variable. By reducing work stress in employees can contribute to lower levels of burnout.
4. This study concludes that workload has a positive and significant effect on burnout, both directly and through work stress as a mediating variable. High workload can affect employees in relation to their work, ultimately increasing the risk of burnout. Additionally, high workload also contributes to increased work stress, which also plays a role in the increased risk of burnout.

## Contribution and Implications

Based on the conclusions obtained, the suggestions that can be given by the author of the practical and theoretical implications of the findings of this research are:

1. The Assistant for Economic Affairs and Development Administration should evaluate the workload of all ASN and Non-ASN employees to reduce the level of burnout within the institution. By reducing the workload, it is hoped that employees can be more effective, improve interpersonal relationships, and ultimately reduce the level of burnout.
2. The results of this study emphasize the importance of work stress in reducing burnout, and it is recommended that the Assistant for Economic and Development Administration expand and strengthen policies and support efforts to reduce work stress. These policies may include flexible working hours, adequate leave, as well as facilities and activities that support the physical and mental well-being of employees.

3. The Assistant for Economic and Development Administration needs to raise awareness among all employees and leaders about the symptoms, impacts, and ways to overcome burnout. This can be done through seminars and internal campaigns. By raising awareness, it is hoped that employees can become more sensitive to the early signs of burnout and take the necessary preventive measures.
4. The Assistant for Economic and Development Administration needs to periodically evaluate the work environment and identify factors that can trigger stress and burnout. These steps can be taken based on the evaluation results. Improving the work environment can include enhancing communication, reducing excessive workloads, increasing social support, and providing fair rewards.
5. For the author, this research is still far from perfect and there are several shortcomings that still need to be addressed, so the findings can also serve as a basis for more in-depth subsequent research. Future research can focus on more specific mediations to reduce workload and work stress, as well as test the effectiveness of these mediations in reducing burnout among Economic and Development Administration Assistant employees. Additionally, future research can also expand the research sample to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the burnout issue in the government environment and a more diverse range of respondent characteristics, so that the conclusions can vary and enrich the research.

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