

***Exploring the Mediating Effect of Work Motivation on the Relationship between Work Environment, Job Stress, and Performance in the Public Sector***

**Eksplorasi Peran Mediasi Motivasi Kerja dalam Hubungan antara Lingkungan Kerja, Stres Kerja, dan Kinerja di Sektor Publik**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study investigates the mediating role of work motivation in the relationship between work environment, job stress, and employee performance at the General Bureau of the Riau Provincial Government. The research adopts a confirmatory and explanatory approach to examine causal relationships among variables based on established theoretical frameworks in human resource management. A saturated sampling technique was applied, involving all 100 employees of the General Bureau as respondents. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with the Partial Least Squares approach (SEM-PLS) through SmartPLS 4.0. The results indicate that the work environment has a significant positive effect on work motivation and employee performance, while job stress has a negative influence on both motivation and performance. Work motivation is proven to play a crucial mediating role, strengthening the positive impact of a supportive work environment on performance and buffering the adverse effects of job stress. These findings suggest that employee performance in the public sector is not only shaped by structural and psychological working conditions but is also strongly driven by the level of internal motivation. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on the integrative model of work environment, job stress, motivation, and performance within a provincial government context. Practically, the findings imply that public sector managers should prioritize the creation of a conducive work environment, effective stress management, and motivational enhancement programs to improve employee performance and organizational effectiveness.*

**Keywords :** Environment, Job Stress, Performance, Motivation

**1. Introduction**

This study examines the role of work motivation as a mediating variable in the relationship between work environment, job stress, and employee performance in the General Bureau of the Regional Secretariat of Riau Province. The discussion begins by describing the institutional context and the importance of human resources in public organizations, followed by the identification of empirical problems related to motivation, work environment, and job stress. Subsequently, the research gap and urgency are elaborated, and finally the objectives and novelty of the study are presented.

The General Bureau is part of the Regional Secretariat of Riau Province and operates under Riau Provincial Regulation Number 7 of 2008 and Riau Governor Regulation Number 11 of 2009, which regulate its organizational structure and functional duties. Based at the Riau Governor's Office, the General Bureau is responsible for managing regional government assets throughout the entire management cycle, from planning and budgeting to monitoring and control, in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 11 of 2014. As a public organization with strategic administrative functions, its performance is highly dependent on the quality of its human resources.

Organizational success, both in private and public institutions, is largely determined by employee performance. Without competent and high-integrity personnel, organizational objectives cannot be achieved optimally. Sutrisno (2019) states that employee performance reflects the level of loyalty and involvement in the organization, which is manifested in commitment, willingness to exert high effort, and alignment with organizational values and goals. Performance is therefore not merely a matter of task completion, but also of active participation and maximum contribution.

Empirical conditions at the General Bureau indicate variations in employee motivation levels. Pre-survey results show that such variations are influenced by internal and external factors, including achievement orientation, recognition needs, job suitability, organizational support, workload, and development opportunities. Employees with high motivation tend to demonstrate stronger responsibility and better service quality, whereas lower motivation reveals weaknesses in organizational support and human resource management. Motivation is a key determinant of performance, as higher motivation enhances performance, while declining motivation constrains the achievement of organizational goals (Harland Goni et al., 2021). Similarly, Ningsih et al. (2022) argue that motivation serves as an internal driving force that encourages individuals to work more effectively in pursuing certain goals, thereby improving their performance.

From the perspective of the work environment, conditions at the General Bureau are generally favorable, supported by adequate facilities, safety, cleanliness, and harmonious interpersonal relationships. However, several aspects remain suboptimal, particularly in the utilization of facilities and the effectiveness of communication, which may limit performance improvement. A conducive work environment is known to enhance motivation and, consequently, performance, whereas an unsupportive environment reduces motivation and negatively affects employee outcomes (Fudzah et al., 2020). Meirin et al. (2024) further explain that improvements in work environment quality positively influence work motivation, which in turn mediates the relationship between work environment and employee performance.

In addition to the work environment, job stress also emerges as a critical issue. Employees at the General Bureau experience relatively high levels of stress arising from workload pressure, tight deadlines, incompatible working relationships, and unclear job information and responsibilities. In human resource management, job stress must be managed effectively because it affects work attitudes, task effectiveness, and the achievement of organizational goals (Kusdiana & Tinaria, 2023). Prasmeswari (2025) found that work motivation plays a significant moderating role in the relationship between job stress and performance, indicating that motivated employees are better able to cope with stress and maintain performance levels. Likewise, Fatiha and Mulyana (2025) confirm the mediating role of motivation, showing that excessive job stress can reduce performance both directly and indirectly through the weakening of employees' internal drive.

Although previous studies have examined the effects of work environment and job stress on performance, and highlighted the importance of motivation, empirical findings remain fragmented regarding the specific mediating role of work motivation, particularly in the context of public sector organizations. Some studies emphasize motivation as a mediator between work environment and performance (Meirin et al., 2024), while others underline its role in the stress–performance relationship (Prasmeswari, 2025; Fatiha & Mulyana, 2025). However, limited research integrates these relationships into a single comprehensive model within a provincial government setting. This constitutes the research gap that underlies the need for the present study.

The urgency of this research is driven by the increasing demands for accountability and service quality in public institutions, which require high-performing and motivated employees

operating in supportive environments and under manageable stress levels. Understanding how work motivation bridges the effects of work environment and job stress on performance is therefore essential for designing effective human resource policies and interventions.

Accordingly, the objective of this study is to analyze the mediating role of work motivation in the relationship between work environment, job stress, and employee performance at the General Bureau of the Riau Provincial Government. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative model that simultaneously examines work environment and job stress through the lens of motivational mediation within a public sector context, thereby providing empirical evidence that enriches the literature on human resource management and organizational behavior in government institutions.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Employee Performance**

Employee performance reflects the level of achievement attained by employees in carrying out their duties and responsibilities in accordance with organizational standards and objectives. Armstrong and Baron (2018) define performance as both the results achieved and the processes undertaken in performing work, emphasizing that performance is closely related to strategic goals, service quality, and organizational effectiveness. Similarly, Edison, Yohny, and Komariyah (2017) state that performance represents the outcomes of a series of work processes conducted by individuals or organizations, which are evaluated based on predetermined standards and agreements within a certain period.

In the public sector context, performance is not only measured by output quantity but also by service quality, accountability, and compliance with regulations (Sutrisno, 2018). Several empirical studies confirm that employee performance is influenced by psychological and environmental factors. For instance, Harland Goni et al. (2021) and Laia (2025) found that motivation significantly enhances employee performance. Meanwhile, Afianti (2025), Sudarmanto et al. (2022), and Tyas et al. (2025) demonstrate that work environment conditions have a direct and indirect impact on employee performance. Furthermore, job stress has also been proven to affect performance negatively when it exceeds employees' coping capacity (Buulolo et al., 2021; Sundary & Irawan Suganda, 2024; Farrell & Nerotou, 2026).

### **Work Motivation**

Work motivation refers to the internal and external forces that drive individuals to exert effort, direct behavior, and persist in achieving work-related goals. Robbins and Judge (2018) describe motivation as a process that determines the intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward goal attainment. In line with this, Idrus, Hakim, and Kamaruddin (2021) explain that motivation functions as a driving force that stimulates and directs human behavior in carrying out continuous activities to achieve organizational targets.

Irawan et al. (2024) emphasize that work motivation encourages responsibility, achievement orientation, self-development, and independent work behavior, all of which support optimal performance. Empirical evidence shows that motivated employees tend to demonstrate higher productivity, stronger commitment, and better service quality (Harland Goni et al., 2021; Sabina et al., 2026). Motivation also plays a mediating role in organizational relationships. Studies by Meirin et al. (2024), Handoko et al. (2022), Sudarmanto et al. (2022), and Widyastuti et al. (2026) confirm that work motivation mediates the influence of work environment on employee performance. Likewise, Ardita and Suwandana (2022), Kumala and Maksum (2023), and Fatiha and Mulyana (2025) show that motivation mediates the relationship between job stress and performance.

### **Work Environment**

The work environment encompasses physical, social, and psychological conditions in which employees perform their tasks. Amiq, Wardhani, and Manafe (2025) state that the work environment plays a critical role in human resource management, as it affects employee safety,

comfort, emotional well-being, and productivity. A supportive environment creates a sense of security and motivation, whereas an unfavorable environment may lead to stress and decreased performance.

Maidiyanto et al. (2021) describe the work environment as consisting of physical facilities, communication quality, and interpersonal relationships that shape employees' attitudes and work behavior. Kusdiana (2018) adds that a comfortable work environment enhances concentration and motivation, enabling employees to achieve targets effectively while maintaining health and safety. Empirical studies by Purnama et al. (2020), Adinda (2023), Afianti (2025), Ningsih et al. (2022), and Tyas et al. (2025) consistently show that improvements in the work environment positively influence motivation and performance. Furthermore, Fudzah et al. (2020) and Widyastuti et al. (2026) confirm that motivation acts as an intervening variable in the relationship between work environment and performance.

### **Job Stress**

Job stress refers to a condition of physical and psychological tension arising from excessive demands, role ambiguity, workload, and interpersonal conflict. Buulolo et al. (2021) define job stress as a negative condition that disrupts work processes and, if prolonged, reduces individual and organizational performance. Sundary and Irawan Suganda (2024) further explain that job stress affects emotional stability, cognitive functioning, and cooperation among employees.

Handoko, as cited in Oktaviani and Irmayanti (2021), describes job stress as a state of tension that influences emotions, thought processes, and work conditions, potentially hindering task completion when not properly managed. Empirical findings show that high job stress lowers motivation and performance (Alifia, 2016; Nanda & Sugiarto, 2020; Karina et al., 2025; Murniyati, 2026). However, motivation can buffer the negative effects of stress. Ardita and Suwandana (2022), Prasmeswari et al. (2025), Fatiha and Mulyana (2025), and Susanto and Pelealu (2026) confirm that work motivation mediates or moderates the relationship between job stress and employee performance, indicating that motivated employees are more resilient in dealing with work pressure.

## **3. Research Methods**

This study employs a confirmatory and explanatory research design, which aims to examine the relationships among variables and to test hypotheses derived from existing theories. Explanatory research is intended to provide empirical evidence to support, refine, or challenge theoretical propositions and findings of previous studies by identifying causal relationships between constructs.

The research was conducted at the General Bureau Work Unit within the Office of the Governor of Riau. The population of this study comprised all employees of the General Bureau of the Riau Provincial Government, totaling 100 individuals. Given the relatively small population size, a saturated sampling technique was applied, in which all members of the population were included as research respondents. According to Sugiyono (2018), saturated sampling is a sampling method that involves using the entire population as the sample.

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), processed with the SmartPLS version 4.0 software. The evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the research constructs. Reflective indicators were examined through convergent and discriminant validity, while reliability was assessed using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha (Ghozali, 2015). The outer model assessment also involved evaluating the  $R^2$  value as an indicator of the model's predictive accuracy for the endogenous constructs (Jogiyanto & Abdillah, 2015).

The structural relationships among variables were formulated in the following equations:  $Y1 = \rho_{x1y1}X1 + \rho_{x2y1}X2 + \rho_{\epsilon1}$  and  $Y2 = \rho_{x1y2}X1 + \rho_{x2y2}X2 + \rho_{y1y2}Y1 + \rho_{\epsilon2}$ , where  $Y1$  represents work motivation,  $Y2$  denotes employee performance,  $X1$  refers to the work environment,  $X2$  indicates job stress,  $\rho$  is the regression coefficient, and  $\epsilon1$  and  $\epsilon2$  are error terms.

The structural model (inner model) was evaluated by examining the  $R^2$  values of the endogenous variables, the magnitude and direction of path coefficients, and their significance

levels. The  $R^2$  value reflects the proportion of variance in the dependent constructs explained by the independent variables, with higher values indicating better predictive power. Path coefficients and their associated t-values and p-values were used to determine the strength and significance of the hypothesized relationships, with a significance criterion of  $p < 0.05$ .

Hypothesis testing was carried out by analyzing the significance of the estimated path coefficients using t-values, with a critical value of  $\geq 1.96$  as the acceptance threshold. The standardized solution was also evaluated to ensure comparability across coefficients, where values approaching 1 indicate stronger effects of the corresponding variables in the causal relationships.

## 4. Results and Discussions

### Model Evaluation

The study employed Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis through SmartPLS version 4.0. As a variance-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach, PLS does not rely on specific distributional assumptions for parameter estimation, making parametric significance tests unnecessary. Model evaluation was carried out by examining the outer (measurement) model and inner (structural) model.

### Inner Model Test Results

The evaluation of the structural model in SmartPLS starts with assessing the  $R^2$  values for all endogenous latent constructs. This analysis focuses on the impact of the work environment and job stress on employee performance, mediated by work motivation at the General Bureau of Riau Province, as shown below:

**Table 1. Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )**

	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
Performance	0.567	0.554
Motivation	0.455	0.444

Source: Processed data from SmartPLS 4.0, 2025.

As presented in Table 1, the latent constructs of work environment and job stress explain 45% of the variability in work motivation ( $R^2 = 0.455$ ), with the remaining 55% attributed to other factors. In terms of employee performance, work environment, job stress, and work motivation collectively explain 55.4% of its variability ( $R^2 = 0.554$ ), while 44.6% is determined by variables outside the scope of this study.

### Measurement Model Results

In SmartPLS, the outer model was evaluated using discriminant validity and composite reliability criteria. The results of the measurement model are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2. Outer Model Setelah Outlier**

Pernyataan	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Work Environment ( $X_1$ )	0.901	0.907
Job Stress ( $X_2$ )	0.862	0.872
Motivation ( $Z$ )	0.853	0.858
Performance ( $Y$ )	0.935	0.939

Source: Processed data from SmartPLS 4.0, 2025.

Based on Table 2, all data meet the criteria for validity and reliability, with composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.7. Therefore, all questionnaire items can be considered reliable.

### Hypothesis Testing Results

The hypotheses were tested through the inner model analysis by examining the  $R^2$  values to assess the model's goodness of fit and the total effects to determine the magnitude and significance of the path coefficients, with a t-statistic threshold of  $\geq 1.96$ . SmartPLS employs the bootstrapping method to estimate the significance of each relationship between variables while

minimizing issues related to non-normal data. Significant estimates can be observed in the inner weight output, which presents the structural model. As shown in Figure 3, the inner weight output values serve as the basis for the analysis in this study.

**Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Based on Total Effects**

Variable	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
Work Environment -> Performance	0.410	0.414	0.101	4.052	0.000
Work Environment -> Motivation	0.591	0.584	0.099	6.003	0.000
Motivation -> Performance	0.350	0.348	0.106	3.314	0.001
Job Stress -> Performance	-0.166	-0.164	0.073	2.271	0.024
Job Stress -> Motivation	-0.228	-0.234	0.070	3.274	0.001

Source: Processed data from SmartPLS 4.0, 2025.

As shown in Table 3, an exogenous variable is deemed statistically significant when its T-statistic exceeds 1.96 or the p-value is below 0.05.

1. As shown in Table 3, the work environment significantly affects work motivation. The t-statistic of 6.003 surpasses the critical threshold of 1.96, with a p-value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ), indicating a strong and statistically significant impact of the work environment on employee motivation at the General Bureau of Riau Province.
2. As indicated in the analysis, work stress exerts a significant negative impact on work motivation. The t-statistic value of 3.375 surpasses the critical threshold of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.024 ( $< 0.05$ ) confirms the statistical significance. This demonstrates that higher levels of work stress are associated with lower work motivation among employees at the General Bureau of Riau Province.
3. The work environment variable has a significant effect on employee performance, as shown in Table 3. The T-statistic value is 4.052, which exceeds the critical value of 1.96, and the p-value is 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). These results confirm that the work environment significantly influences employee performance at the General Bureau of Riau Province.
4. The work stress variable has a significant negative effect on employee performance, as shown in Table 3. The T-statistic value is -2.271, which exceeds the critical value of 1.96 in absolute terms, and the p-value is 0.024 ( $< 0.05$ ). These results indicate that work stress significantly and negatively influences employee performance at the General Bureau of Riau Province.
5. The work motivation variable has a significant effect on employee performance, as shown in Table 3. The T-statistic value is 3.314, exceeding the critical value of 1.96, and the p-value is 0.001 ( $< 0.05$ ). These findings confirm that work motivation significantly influences employee performance at the General Bureau of Riau Province.

**Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Based on Indirect Effect**

Variable	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
Job Stress -> Motivation -> Performance	-0.080	-0.082	0.037	2.144	0.032
Work Environment -> Motivation -> Performance	0.207	0.204	0.074	2.780	0.006

Source: Processed data from SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 4 above, an exogenous variable is considered significant if the T-statistic value is greater than 1.96 or the p-value is less than 0.05.

1. The work environment variable has a significant effect on employee performance through work motivation, as shown in Table 4. The T-statistic value is 2.780, exceeding the critical value of 1.96, and the p-value is 0.006 ( $< 0.05$ ). These results confirm that the work environment significantly influences employee performance through motivation at the General Bureau of Riau Province.

2. The work stress variable has a significant effect on employee performance through work motivation, as shown in Table 4. The T-statistic value is -2.144, exceeding the critical value of 1.96 in absolute terms, and the p-value is 0.032 ( $< 0.05$ ). These results confirm that work stress significantly influences employee performance via motivation at the General Bureau of Riau Province.

## Discussion

This research aimed to examine the influence of work environment and work stress on employee performance, with work motivation acting as a mediating variable, at the General Bureau of Riau Province. A total of 100 respondents participated, and data were obtained using a structured questionnaire administered over a period of roughly two weeks. The subsequent discussion provides an in-depth analysis of the empirical findings derived from hypothesis testing.

### The Effect of Work Environment on Work Motivation

The study findings indicate a significant effect of the work environment on employee work motivation, with a T-statistic of 6.003 ( $> 1.96$ ) and a p-value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis regarding the influence of work environment on work motivation is statistically supported.

A conducive work environment plays a crucial role in enhancing both employee motivation and performance. A comfortable and safe workplace, supported by adequate facilities and harmonious interpersonal relationships, fosters a positive psychological condition for employees. Therefore, organizations should continuously manage and improve the quality of the work environment, both physically and non-physically, to support productivity and optimize the achievement of organizational goals.

This study is in line with previous research conducted by (Purnama et al., 2020), (Adinda, 2023) and (Laia, 2025), indicated a significant effect of work environment on work motivation, whereas this study's results differ from those of (Manao, 2022), stated that the work environment does not have a significant effect on work motivation.

### The Effect of Work Stress on Work Motivation

The findings reveal that work stress significantly decreases employee motivation, with a T-statistic of 3.375 ( $> 1.96$ ) and a p-value of 0.024 ( $< 0.05$ ), confirming the proposed hypothesis. Elevated stress levels diminish motivation and engagement due to factors such as heavy workload, tight deadlines, role conflicts, and ambiguous tasks. To counter these effects, organizations should adopt comprehensive stress management practices, including fair task distribution, transparent communication, and provision of psychological support, to sustain employee motivation and performance.

The findings of this study are consistent with those reported by (Alifia, 2016), (Nanda & Sugiarto, 2020), which stated that work stress has a significant negative effect on work motivation. This finding differs from the study conducted by (H & Mulyani, 2025), showing that work stress significantly affects motivation. (Hastuti et al., 2024), the findings show that work stress has no significant impact on motivation.

### The Effect of Work Environment on Employee Performance

The results reveal a significant positive impact of the work environment on employee performance, with a T-statistic of 4.052 ( $> 1.96$ ) and a p-value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). A well-supported and comfortable work setting facilitates employees' efficiency and effectiveness, contributing to higher performance outcomes.

A supportive work environment contributes to higher team motivation and facilitates employee collaboration. Good interpersonal relationships allow employees to assist each other, exchange knowledge, and work together effectively, resulting in improved productivity. Consequently, organizations need to consistently enhance workplace quality through sufficient facilities, ergonomic workspace design, and the cultivation of a positive work culture.

The findings of this study are in agreement with those reported by (Afianti, 2025) and (Susanto & Pelealu, 2026), which stated that the work environment has a significant effect on employee performance. (Puspita Ni Luh Ketut et al., 2024), argued that the work environment

does not always serve as the primary factor in predicting employee performance, as other variables, such as leadership, may play a more dominant role. The study conducted by (Harahap & Qarni, 2025), stated that the work environment does not have a significant effect on employee performance.

### **The Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance**

The test results indicate that work stress has a significant negative effect on employee performance. The T-statistic was -2.271 (absolute value > 1.96) with a p-value of 0.024 (< 0.05), suggesting that increased levels of work stress contribute to a decline in employee performance. High stress levels can disrupt concentration and increase the likelihood of errors in task execution. Excessive work pressure also leads to reduced work quality, diminished productivity, and a higher risk of fatigue and absenteeism. Furthermore, prolonged work stress may negatively impact employees' physical and psychological health.

Beyond its negative effect on performance, work stress may diminish employees' innovative capacity and initiative. High-pressure conditions often lead employees to engage in defensive work behaviors, concentrating only on primary task completion while neglecting opportunities for quality improvement. Organizations should therefore adopt stress management strategies, including equitable workload distribution, provision of relaxation resources, and improved supervisor-employee communication to sustain optimal performance.

This study is in line with the research conducted by (Ardita & Suwandana, 2022), indicated a significant negative impact of work stress on performance, in contrast to the study by (Farrell Josia K. Nerotou, 2026), showed that work stress has no significant impact on employee performance, in contrast to the findings of (Naufal & Kadarmanda, 2026) and (Murniyati, 2026), stated that work stress has a significant effect on employee performance.

### **The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance**

The study confirms a significant positive relationship between work motivation and employee performance, evidenced by a t-statistic of 3.314 and a p-value of 0.001 (< 0.05). These findings indicate that employees with higher motivation tend to demonstrate superior performance. Work motivation functions as an internal driver that fosters enthusiasm, accountability, and a strong focus on achieving optimal outcomes.

High work motivation drives employees to exhibit responsibility, loyalty, and commitment in delivering optimal contributions to the organization. Motivation serves as an internal mechanism that enhances work enthusiasm, professionalism, and overall performance quality. As employee motivation increases, performance outcomes also improve. Consequently, organizations must strategically manage work motivation through reward systems, competency development, and effective communication to ensure sustained employee performance.

The findings of the present study contradict those of earlier studies conducted by (Susanti et al., 2024), The study reveals that work motivation does not exert a positive and significant influence on employee performance. This result is in accordance with previous research conducted by (Tyas et al., 2025) and (Sabina et al., 2026), there is a significant relationship between work motivation and performance.

### **The Influence of the Work Environment on Employee Performance Mediated by Work Motivation**

The findings reveal that the work environment significantly influences employee performance through work motivation as an intervening variable. The effect is supported by a t-statistic of 2.780 (> 1.96) and a p-value of 0.006 (< 0.05), indicating that work motivation mediates the relationship between the work environment and employee performance.

A conducive work environment positively influences employees' internal motivation, which in turn enhances performance. Adequate facilities, a comfortable working atmosphere, and harmonious working relationships not only improve the technical aspects of work but also strengthen employees' psychological conditions. Work motivation serves as a mediator linking the work environment to performance. Therefore, management needs to optimize the work environment through the provision of adequate facilities, the creation of a positive work climate,

and the strengthening of internal communication to sustainably enhance employee motivation and performance.

The present study does not corroborate the results of earlier studies conducted by (Susanto & Pelealu, 2026) and (Widyastuti et al., 2026). The results indicate that work motivation does not mediate the relationship between the work environment and employee performance. This finding is in line with previous research conducted by (Handoko et al., 2022) and (Sudarmanto et al., 2022). The findings indicate that the work environment significantly influences employee performance through work motivation as an intervening variable.

### **The Influence of Job Stress on Employee Performance Mediated by Work Motivation**

The results indicate that job stress significantly influences employee performance through work motivation as an intervening variable, as evidenced by a t-statistic of  $-2.144$  and a p-value of  $0.032$  ( $< 0.05$ ). These findings suggest that higher levels of job stress decrease motivation and subsequently reduce employee performance.

Job stress may undermine employee motivation by generating psychological pressure that alters work-related attitudes and behaviors, including reduced enthusiasm, commitment, and work engagement. Consequently, organizations should adopt stress mitigation strategies, such as balanced workload management, counseling services, and open communication practices, to sustain employee motivation and performance.

The results of this study align with the findings of previous research conducted by (Nanda & Sugiarto, 2020), (Kumala & Maksum, 2023) and (Fatiha & Mulyana, 2025) and (Karina et al., 2025), the findings indicate that job stress has a negative indirect effect on employee performance through work motivation as an intervening variable.

## **5. Conclusion**

The findings indicate that the work environment positively and significantly affects employee motivation and performance, whereas job stress has a significant negative effect. Work motivation serves as an intervening variable that mediates the effects of the work environment and job stress on employee performance.

To enhance employee performance at the General Bureau of Riau Province, management should focus on improving the work environment by ensuring adequate facilities, a comfortable workspace, and effective communication supported by harmonious working relationships. Furthermore, job stress should be managed through balanced task allocation, realistic workload management, and the provision of counseling services or relaxation programs. Employee motivation can also be strengthened through rewards, career development opportunities, and training. Regular monitoring of stress and motivation levels is recommended to identify potential problems at an early stage. Future studies are encouraged to explore other relevant variables not examined in this research.

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