

Career Path Mediation in the Influence of Workload, Compensation, and Work Discipline on Employee Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the effects of workload, work discipline, career path, and compensation on employee performance through Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. Findings indicate that workload, when managed adaptively, positively influences both performance and career advancement by fostering competence and promotion opportunities. Work discipline significantly enhances performance but does not affect career progression, serving as a mechanism to preserve existing resources. Career path improves performance and mediates the relationships between workload and discipline with performance. Compensation contributes positively to performance yet shows no impact on career development, suggesting financial rewards are more closely tied to motivation than perceived growth. Overall, the study highlights career development as a transformative element in resource accumulation that strengthens employee performance. Organizations are encouraged to design clear and equitable career pathways as part of sustainable human resource management strategies.

Keywords: *Workload; Work Discipline; Career Path; Compensation; Career Development; COR Theory; Employee Performance*

1. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is widely acknowledged as a cornerstone of organizational success and sustainability. In the era of global competition, organizations must strategically manage human resources to enhance productivity and ensure long-term resilience. Several factors, namely workload, work discipline, career path, and compensation, have been consistently identified as key determinants of employee performance and career development.

Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides a robust theoretical lens to understand these dynamics. COR theory posits that individuals strive to obtain, retain, and protect valued resources, and that resource loss is more detrimental than resource gain is beneficial (Hobfoll, 1989). Later expansions emphasized the role of culture and community in shaping resource processes (Hobfoll, 2001). While recent applications highlight organizational contexts where career development acts as a transformative mechanism for resource accumulation (Gong et al., 2018) (Hobfoll et al., 2018)

Empirical evidence supports these theoretical insights. Workload, when managed adaptively, can enhance competence and open promotion opportunities (Karampas et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2023; Sonnentag et al., 2023; Taufik, n.d.). Discipline has been shown to preserve resources and strengthen performance outcomes (Masruddin et al., 2025; Rahmi Andini Syamsuddin, 2021). Career path not only improves performance but also mediates the effects of workload and discipline (Dewantari et al., 2025; Gursoy et al., 2013). Compensation, while positively influencing motivation and performance, does not consistently predict career advancement (Caesens & Stinglhamber, n.d.; Judge & Bono, 2001).

Integrating these findings, this study emphasizes career development as a transformative element in the resource accumulation process. By embedding career pathways into HR strategies, organizations can foster resilience, enhance employee performance, and secure long-term competitiveness.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Research & Scope Type

This study is a descriptive study, using primary data that comes from the respondents directly. This research instrument uses a questionnaire that is distributed to the respondents for content and returned to the researchers.

2.2. Data Analysis

Data analysis with SEM PLS is through 2 measurements: (1) Evaluation of measurement (outer model) consists of 2 tests; (1) Validity test and (2) Reliability test. Validities consist of (a) Convergent validity and (b) Discriminant validity. Convergence validity tests Loading factor, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Discrimination validity; validity testing Fornell larcker criterion HTMT and following Crossloading. The reliability test is to test whether the indicator used is reliable or powerful to measure the variable. Assessments used in reliability testing are: (1) Composit reliability and (2) Cronbach's alpha. (2) Evaluation of the structure of the model (inner model) to test (1) R square, (2) path coefficient, (3) T statistic (bootstrapping), (4) predictive relevance, (5) model fit.

2.3. Hypothesis

H1: Workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H2: Compensation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H3: Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H4: Workload has a positive and significant effect on career path.

H5: Compensation has a positive and significant effect on career path.

H6: Work discipline has a positive and significant effect on career path.

H7: Career path has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

H8: Career path mediates the effect of workload, compensation, and work discipline on employee performance.

H9: Career path mediates the effect of compensation on employee performance.

H10: Career path mediates the effect of work discipline on employee performance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. T Statistic (Bootstrapping)

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Significance
Workload → Career Path	0.482	3.985	0.000	Significant
Workload → Performance	0.458	3.459	0.001	Significant
Work Discipline → Career Path	0.188	0.956	0.34	Not Significant
Work Discipline → Performance	0.378	2.243	0.025	Significant
Career Path → Performance	0.328	2.68	0.008	Significant
Compensation → Career Path	-0.021	0.135	0.893	Not Significant
Compensation → Performance	0.33	2.765	0.044	Significant
Workload → Career Path → Performance	0.158	1.957	0.041	Significant (Mediated)
Work Discipline → Career Path → Performance	0.162	1.888	0.038	Significant (Mediated)
Compensation → Career Path → Performance	0.007	0.13	0.897	Not Significant

3.1. Results

Workload → Career Path ;The relationship is significant ($p = 0.000$), indicating that workload has a positive effect on career path development.

Workload → Performance ; The effect is significant ($p = 0.001$), showing that workload positively influences employee performance.

Work Discipline → Career Path ; The relationship is not significant ($p = 0.340$), meaning work discipline does not directly affect career path progression.

Work Discipline → Performance ; The effect is significant ($p = 0.025$), suggesting that work discipline positively impacts performance.

Career Path → Performance ; The relationship is significant ($p = 0.008$), indicating that career path advancement contributes to improved performance.

Compensation → Career Path ; The effect is not significant ($p = 0.893$), showing that compensation does not influence career path development.

Compensation → Performance ; The relationship is significant ($p = 0.044$), meaning compensation positively affects performance.

Workload → Career Path → Performance; The mediated effect is significant ($p = 0.041$), indicating that career path mediates the influence of workload on performance.

Work Discipline → Career Path → Performance; The mediated effect is significant ($p = 0.038$), showing that career path mediates the influence of work discipline on performance.

Compensation → Career Path → Performance; The mediated effect is not significant ($p = 0.897$), meaning career path does not mediate the relationship between compensation and performance.

3.2. Discussion

The study supports the influence of Workload on Career Path, showing that workload significantly affects career path development. This finding indicates that employees who are able to manage higher workloads tend to have greater opportunities for promotion or career advancement. Such evidence is consistent with theories that link task demands to career growth, where challenging workloads can serve as a driver of motivation and perceptions of career development opportunities.

The study supports Workload has a significant positive effect on performance, indicating that employees under higher demands tend to deliver stronger outcomes. This aligns with prior findings that workload can enhance productivity when managed effectively, though excessive workload may risk burnout.

The study not supported Work discipline did not significantly affect career path progression. This implies that disciplined behavior alone may not guarantee career advancement, which often depends on organizational policies, opportunities, and managerial recognition.

The study Supported Discipline significantly improves performance, highlighting that adherence to rules, punctuality, and consistency directly contribute to better work outcomes. This finding reinforces the importance of organizational culture in fostering disciplined work behavior.

The study supported Career path advancement positively influences performance, suggesting that employees who perceive clear career trajectories are more motivated and committed to achieving higher performance levels.

The study not supported Compensation did not significantly affect career path development. This indicates that financial rewards alone do not shape career progression, which is more strongly influenced by workload, skills, and organizational structures.

The study supported Compensation positively impacts performance, confirming that financial incentives remain an important motivator for employees to deliver better results, even if they do not directly influence career advancement.

The study supported Career path mediates the relationship between workload and performance, showing that workload not only directly enhances performance but also indirectly strengthens it through career development opportunities.

The study supported Career path mediates the effect of discipline on performance, indicating that disciplined employees may achieve better performance partly because they perceive career growth opportunities linked to their behavior.

The study not supported Career path does not mediate the relationship between compensation and performance, suggesting that compensation influences performance directly rather than through career development.

4. CONCLUSION

This study provides comprehensive evidence on the relationships among workload, work discipline, compensation, career path, and employee performance. The findings confirm that workload is the most influential factor, exerting both direct and indirect effects on performance through career path. Employees who manage higher workloads not only demonstrate stronger performance but also perceive greater opportunities for career advancement, consistent with theories linking task demands to career growth.

The role of work discipline is also significant, directly enhancing performance outcomes, although it does not contribute to career path progression. This highlights the importance of organizational culture in fostering disciplined behavior, which translates into measurable improvements in performance.

Career path itself emerges as a critical predictor of performance, reinforcing the need for structured career development programs. Moreover, career path mediates the effects of workload and discipline on performance, underscoring its role as a mechanism through which organizational factors shape employee outcomes.

In contrast, compensation demonstrates a more limited role. While financial incentives positively influence performance, they do not significantly affect career path nor exert mediated effects. This suggests that compensation serves primarily as a short-term motivator, whereas workload and career development opportunities provide more sustainable pathways to improved performance.

Overall, the study emphasizes that organizations aiming to enhance employee performance should prioritize workload management, career path development, and disciplined work culture, while maintaining fair compensation systems. By integrating these elements, organizations can achieve both immediate performance gains and long-term career growth, thereby fostering sustainable organizational effectiveness.

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