

THE ROLE OF WORK MOTIVATION IN MEDIATING THE EFFECT OF WORKLOAD AND COMPETENCE ON THE PERFORMANCE OF FUNCTIONAL PLANNING OFFICERS IN KLUNGKUNG REGENCY

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the role of work motivation in mediating the influence of workload and competence on the performance of employees in the Functional Position of Planners in Klungkung Regency. This study is motivated by the gap between administrative performance assessment and substantive performance quality, high and complex workloads, limited technical competence, and suboptimal work motivation. This study uses a quantitative survey-based approach involving the entire population of the Functional Position of Planners in Klungkung Regency, totaling 53 employees. Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method. The results show that workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, but a negative and significant effect on work motivation. Competence has a positive and significant effect on both work motivation and employee performance. Work motivation also has a positive and significant effect on employee performance and acts as a partial mediating variable in the relationship between workload and competence on employee performance. This study recommends optimizing workload management, improving employee competence through continuous technical training, strengthening work motivation through proportional and fair assignments, and intensifying performance monitoring as an effort to improve performance quality continuously.

Keywords: Workload, Competence, Work Motivation, Employee Performance

INTRODUCTION

In the public sector worldwide, development planning excellence in quality functions as a critical linchpin for achieving robust governance and enduring developmental results. In Indonesia, local governments hold strategic responsibilities in planning, monitoring, and evaluating regional development. Klungkung Regency Government in Bali Province covers approximately 31,396 hectares across four districts and carries significant responsibilities in maintaining development quality. The effectiveness of these functions depends heavily on professional human resources, particularly Functional Planning Officers. From a human resource management perspective, employee performance management is a key instrument for ensuring organizational effectiveness (Cahya et al., 2021; Ratmono et al., 2024).

Klungkung Regency employs 4,346 civil servants, yet only 53 serve as Functional Planning Officers, while the ideal requirement is 174 officers. This gap potentially increases workload and affects planning quality. Although performance appraisal scores show improvement, substantive evaluation findings indicate recurring weaknesses.



Table 1. Performance Appraisal Recap 2022–2024

Year	Predikat SKP				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
2022	5,88	94,11	0	0	0
2023	25	75	0	0	0
2024	26,41	73,58	0	0	0

Table 2. Ministry Evaluation Findings

No	Evaluation Results of the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform		
	2022	2023	2024
1.	There are still performance indicators that do not meet the SMART principles.	There are still performance indicators that do not meet the SMART principles.	The determination of performance targets has not fully used appropriate target-oriented language and is not yet results-oriented.
2.	It was found that several target indicator formulations in the planning documents had the same targets and were repeated annually, indicating that the target setting does not yet reflect the final conditions to be achieved.	There are still several performance indicators with targets lower than the achievements of the previous year.	There is still a misalignment between strategic objectives and the indicators listed in the planning documents, and the established performance indicators are still lower than the achievements of the previous year.

Employee performance reflects the output of one’s efforts, measured through both caliber and volume, aligned with assigned duties (Sutrisno, 2016; Mangkunegara, 2017). Workload constitutes a key variable shaping performance outcomes, defined as the number of job demands that must be completed within a certain period (Koesomowidjojo, 2017). A high workload can create pressure and reduce work effectiveness if adequate resources do not support it. Several studies have found that workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance (Silaban et al., 2021; Kurniawan et al., 2022; Mulyadi et al., 2024). However, Suryani and Muryati (2025) reported different findings. In the context of Klungkung Regency, planners are required to complete an average of 12 documents per year and conduct data input in the Regional Government Information System (SIPD) in accordance with Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 70/2019, which increases task complexity and potential work pressure.

Competence denotes the amalgamation of knowledge, skills, and professional disposition (Wibowo, 2016; Rivai & Sagala, 2011), equipping employees to execute their responsibilities with precision and efficacy. Multiple investigations indicate that competence acts as a potent and statistically significant enhancer of employee performance (Idayanti et al., 2020; Aliyyah et al., 2021; Putra et al., 2024). However, Simanjuntak & B (2025) found a non-significant result. In Klungkung Regency, out of 53 planners, only 13 hold a master's degree, and 5 have attended basic planner training. This circumstance falls short of the prescribed technical, managerial, and socio-cultural competency benchmarks stipulated under Ministerial Regulation of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 20/2024. These competency limitations potentially affect the quality of outcome-based indicators and the alignment of regional strategic planning documents.



Work motivation functions as an intrinsic force propelling employees toward the attainment of organizational objectives (Sutrisno, 2016; Muhfizar et al., 2021). Motivation indicators include responsibility, recognition, opportunities for advancement, and challenging work (Mahardika & Suryawirawan, 2023). Earlier inquiries suggest that workload and competence may shape performance indirectly by channeling their effects through work motivation (Aliyyah et al., 2021; Rimbayana et al., 2022; Ndawa et al., 2025). However, inconsistent findings have also been reported (Rulianto et al., 2023). Based on preliminary interviews, planners in Klungkung experience less-than-optimal motivation due to limited recognition, restricted career development opportunities, and the complexity of administrative tasks.

Employee Performance. Performance denotes the degree of attainment in executing programs or policies to accomplish organizational aims (Moehersono, 2012:95), encapsulating documented results of designated job functions within a defined timeframe (Bernardin & Russell, 2013) and as an evaluation of individual work results compared with organizational standards (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Employee performance signifies the caliber and volume of outputs delivered in alignment with entrusted responsibilities (Sutrisno, 2016; Mangkunegara, 2017), and can be measured through quality, quantity, timeliness, and effectiveness (Robbins & Coulter, 2018). Sedarmayanti (2017) emphasizes that performance reflects work results achieved based on authority, responsibility, and ethics to attain organizational objectives. According to PermenPANRB No. 22 of 2024, performance is the measurable output or outcome of programs linked to budget utilization.

Thus, employee performance can be understood as measurable individual or collective work results aligned with assigned duties and organizational objectives. Ratmono et al. (2024) identify workload, work environment, and motivation as key determinants influencing performance directly and indirectly. In Indonesia, civil servant (ASN) performance management is regulated under PermenPANRB No. 6 of 2022 and PermenPANRB No. 22 of 2024, which emphasize objective, measurable, transparent, and accountable systems. Empirical evidence from Silaban et al. (2021), Firmansyah & Nugrohoseno (2022), Saputra et al. (2024), and Putra et al. (2024) highlights the significant influence of competence and workload, while Nugraha et al. (2021), Dinh & Nghi (2022), and Rozi et al. (2024) confirm the critical role of motivation. This study adopts combined performance indicators from Saputra et al. (2024), Yuyun et al. (2024), and Putra et al. (2025).

1. Work quantity
2. Work quality
3. Attendance
4. Timeliness
5. Teamwork skills

Workload. Workload refers to the magnitude of job demands imposed on an individual, both physically and mentally, which may influence stress levels and performance achievement (Gibson et al., 2012). Workload denotes the aggregate of duties or activities that employees are required to finalize within a specified timeframe, which, if not balanced, may lead to pressure, fatigue, or decreased performance (Handoko, 2012). Rivai (2015) conceptualizes workload as a constellation of duties that employees are obligated to accomplish within a defined temporal boundary in accordance with their role specifications. Munandar (2016) defines job demands as the number of demands that must be accomplished quantitatively and qualitatively within a certain time span. Koesomowidjojo (2017) states that workload is a collection of activities performed by employees or organizational units in completing work within a given period. Furthermore, Robbins & Judge (2017) define workload as the intensity of job demands received by individuals, particularly when the number of tasks exceeds their capacity or available resources.



Synthesizing these perspectives, workload can be understood as the volume and intensity of tasks or demands that individuals or organizational units are expected to fulfill within a set period. According to Koesomowidjojo (2017), workload indicators include:

1. Target to be achieved
2. Use of working time
3. Work conditions

Rohman et al. (2023) and Saputra et al. (2024) identify four indicators:

1. Target to be achieved
2. Use of working time
3. Work conditions
4. Work standards

Several previous studies confirm the relationship between workload, motivation, and employee performance. Silaban et al. (2021) found that workload negatively and significantly affects employee performance. Kurniawan et al. (2022) also reported that workload has a negative and significant effect on performance and motivation, and that motivation mediates the relationship. Hutabarat et al. (2023) found that workload suppresses motivation, while Sari et al. (2024) reported its adverse impact on both performance and motivation, mediated by motivation itself. Natsir et al. (2025) further validated that workload significantly undermines performance and motivation, with motivation serving as an intervening link.

Additional studies support these findings. Aliyyah et al. (2021) found that workload negatively affects performance and motivation, and indirectly influences performance through motivation. Astuti & Mayasari (2021) identified a significant negative effect of workload on motivation. Manalu et al. (2022), Nurofik & Yuliana (2022), Herdiana et al. (2023), Kurniawati et al. (2023), Mulyadi et al. (2024), and Karina et al. (2025) consistently observed that heightened workload erodes employee performance, while Dewi et al. (2023) and Ferava et al. (2021) highlighted motivation as a key mediator of this effect. Ndawa et al. (2025) similarly confirmed that workload exerts a significant influence on performance via motivational mediation.

Based on theory and empirical evidence, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- H1: Elevated workload detrimentally and significantly impacts employee performance
- H4: Workload exerts a negative and significant influence on employees' motivational drive
- H6: Work motivation functions as a mediator in the adverse effect of workload on employee performance

Competence. Competence can be construed as the integrated blend of abilities, knowledge, skills, and attitudes that shape an individual's efficacy within an organizational context (Gibson et al., 1997). Dubois & Rothwell (2004) characterize competence as discernible traits reflecting the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for attaining exceptional performance Mathis & Jackson (2011) frame competence as the fusion of knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal traits shaping job effectiveness, while Rivai & Sagala (2011) view it as an individual's capacity to execute tasks grounded in skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Armstrong (2014) portrays competence as the requisite knowledge, skills, and behaviors for effective task execution. Wibowo (2016) frames it as the capability to perform duties underpinned by knowledge, skills, and work attitudes, while Sedarmayanti (2017) highlights competence as an intrinsic trait linked causally to effective performance.

In the world of work, higher competence increases individual value and competitiveness. To achieve competence, human resources are required to continuously develop themselves through education and experience (Siswadi & Farisi, 2022). Based on these definitions, competence can be



concluded as work ability possessed by an individual through the integration of knowledge, skills, and work attitudes acquired through education, experience, and self-development. These factors indicate that competence is not only shaped by technical skills but also by psychological and personal dimensions that support job effectiveness. According to Putra et al. (2025), competence can be measured using five indicators:

1. Motive
2. Characteristics
3. Self-concept
4. Knowledge
5. Skills

This study uses the indicators proposed by Putra et al. (2025): motive, characteristics, self-concept, knowledge, and skills. Competence serves as the core asset enabling employees to fulfill their roles. Those with elevated competence grasp tasks more adeptly, make sound decisions, and execute work efficiently, driving peak performance. Spencer & Spencer (1993) define it as a fundamental personal trait directly linked to effective outcomes.

Empirical evidence supports this relationship. Idayanti et al. (2020), Oppong & Zhau (2020), Aliyyah et al. (2021), Cahyaningtyas & Santosa (2021), Krisnawati & Bagia (2021), Silaban et al. (2021), Firmansyah & Nugrohoseno (2022), Rimbayana et al. (2022), Wahyuni & Budiono (2022), Puji Salvano et al. (2023), Yahya et al. (2023), Maimunah et al. (2024), Maulany et al. (2024), Putra et al. (2024), Rahmawati et al. (2024), Riyantisa & Survival (2024), Saputra et al. (2024), and Kustono et al. (2025) consistently demonstrate that higher competence positively and significantly enhances employee performance.

Competence likewise shapes motivational intensity; individuals who command their role demands typically exhibit stronger self-assurance and heightened drive in task accomplishment. Herzberg (1959), in the Two-Factor Theory, emphasizes that achievement and personal growth are strong motivators. When employees perceive themselves as competent, intrinsic motivation increases, suggesting that competence exerts a meaningful and constructive impact on work motivation. Work motivation acts as an intermediary between competence and performance, where higher competence fuels greater motivational drive, subsequently boosting performance results. This mediating role is corroborated by Fuad & Aminnudin (2021), Rimbayana et al. (2022), Selfianus et al. (2023), Riyantisa & Survival (2024), and Ndawa et al. (2025), who report that motivation channels the effect of competence onto employee performance. Drawing on these theoretical and empirical insights, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Competence positively and meaningfully influences employee performance.

H5: Competence significantly enhances work motivation.

H7: Work motivation serves as a conduit for the effect of competence on performance.

Work Motivation. Work motivation refers to internal and external forces that drive employees to act toward achieving organizational goals (Mangkunegara, 2005). It involves energetic impulses that initiate, direct, and sustain work behavior (Pinder, 2008), explaining the intensity, direction, and persistence of goal pursuit (Robbins & Judge, 2008). Motivation also represents factors that encourage individuals to perform tasks aligned with organizational targets (Sutrisno, 2016) and inner drives that support responsibility fulfillment (Muhfizar et al., 2021). Thus, work motivation can be understood as internal and external encouragement that directs individuals to perform optimally.

In organizations, motivation functions as a psychological engine shaping enthusiasm, commitment, and persistence. Highly motivated employees show stronger initiative and



accountability in achieving performance outcomes. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) distinguishes motivator factors such as achievement, recognition, career advancement, and personal growth from hygiene factors, including work conditions, policies, relationships, and compensation. Motivators enhance satisfaction and performance, while hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction, indicating that motivation stems not only from financial rewards but also from psychological fulfillment and meaningful work.

Motivation is influenced by multiple factors, including promotion, achievement, job characteristics, rewards, responsibility, recognition, and success (Sunyoto in Ariyati & Amelia, 2018). Promotion and achievement foster growth and confidence, meaningful work strengthens intrinsic satisfaction, and rewards and recognition reinforce positive behavior. Responsibility and successful outcomes build accountability and pride, highlighting that motivation is multidimensional, encompassing both intrinsic and extrinsic elements (Mahardika & Suryawirawan, 2023).

1. Responsibility
2. Work achievement
3. Opportunity for advancement
4. Recognition of performance
5. Challenging work

This study employs the indicators of responsibility, work achievement, opportunity for advancement, recognition, and challenging work proposed by Mahardika and Suryawirawan (2023), as they correspond to the research context. Work motivation is a crucial determinant of employee performance. Highly motivated employees demonstrate greater enthusiasm, initiative, discipline, and accountability, which enhance productivity and work quality (Putra & Santosa, 2023). Performance depends not only on competence but also on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which drives creativity and active contribution toward organizational goals (Ratmono et al., 2024). Empirical evidence consistently confirms a positive and significant relationship between work motivation and employee performance (Oppong & Zhau, 2020; Aliyyah et al., 2021; Fuad & Aminuddin, 2021; Ferava et al., 2021; Nugraha et al., 2021; Dinh & Nghi, 2022; Kurniawan et al., 2022; Kurniawati et al., 2023; Puji Salvano et al., 2023; Maimunah et al., 2024; Maulany et al., 2024; Rahmawati et al., 2024; Rozi et al., 2024; Sari et al., 2024; Sugita et al., 2024; Natsir et al., 2025).

Motivation also operates as a psychological mechanism linking individual capability and organizational outcomes. Employees who feel recognized, challenged, and provided with growth opportunities develop stronger commitment and persistence in achieving performance targets. When motivational conditions are fulfilled, employees experience higher engagement levels, which ultimately translate into improved organizational effectiveness. Based on the theoretical and empirical explanations above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Work motivation positively and significantly influences employee performance.

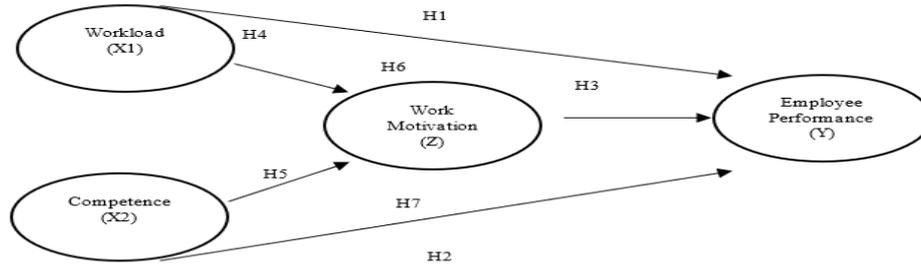


Figure 1. Research Framework

METHODS

This research utilizes a quantitative, explanatory survey framework to explore the causal interplay between workload, competence, work motivation, and employee performance in the Klungkung Regency Regional Government (Sugiyono, 2017). The population comprises all 53 Civil Servants in Functional Planner roles, and given its limited size, a saturated sampling approach was used, encompassing the full population as the study sample (Sugiyono, 2019; Arikunto, 2014). Workload (X1) and competence (X2) serve as independent factors, employee performance (Y) as the outcome variable, and work motivation (Z) as the mediator, with measurement indicators drawn from previous research. Data were gathered through observation, interviews, literature review, and Google Forms questionnaires employing a five-point Likert scale. (Sugiyono, 2018). The instruments' validity and reliability were assessed via Cronbach's Alpha (Ghozali, 2013). Data analysis included descriptive analysis and inferential analysis using SEM-PLS, encompassing outer and inner model evaluation, Goodness of Fit testing, bootstrapping at a 5% significance level, and mediation analysis to assess direct and indirect effects.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model). The assessment of the measurement framework verifies that every indicator assigned to represent Workload, Competence, Work Motivation, and Employee Performance demonstrates acceptable validity and reliability standards. All loading factor values exceed 0.5, demonstrating strong correlations between indicators and their respective latent constructs. Moreover, each construct exhibits an AVE exceeding 0.5, signaling solid convergent legitimacy, while Composite Reliability surpasses 0.7, reflecting robust internal cohesion. Hence, the measurement schema satisfies validity and reliability thresholds, rendering it fit for subsequent structural examination.

Table 3. Convergent Validity/Outer Loading

Indicator	Workload (X1)	Competence (X2)	Work Motivation (Z)	Employee Performance (Y)
X1.1 Target to be Achieved	0.94			
X1.2 Use of Working Time	0.909			
X1.3 Work Conditions	0.905			
X1.4 Work Standards	0.919			
X2.1 Motive		0.914		
X2.2 Characteristics		0.903		
X2.3 Self-Concept		0.876		



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X2.4 Knowledge	0.817		
X2.5 Skills	0.673		
Z1 Responsibility		0.912	
Z2 Work Achievement		0.921	
Z3 Opportunity for Advancement		0.937	
Z4 Recognition of Performance		0.849	
Z5 Challenging Work		0.733	
Y1 Work Quality			0.812
Y2 Work Quantity			0.914
Y3 Timeliness			0.788
Y4 Attendance			0.884
Y5 Teamwork Skills			0.812

Table 3, indicating that the item values generated by the research constructs meet the criteria for convergent validity, as evidenced by factor loadings greater than 0,5. Therefore, the 19 construct indicators used in this study are considered valid.

Table 4. Discriminant Cross Loading

Indicator	Workload (X1)	Competence (X2)	Work Motivation (Z)	Employee Performance (Y)
X1.1 Target to be Achieved	0,940	0,570	0,553	0,135
X1.2 Use of Working Time	0,909	0,547	0,508	0,065
X1.3 Work Conditions	0,905	0,450	0,493	0,060
X1.4 Work Standards	0,919	0,562	0,523	0,091
X2.1 Motive	0,470	0,914	0,670	0,520
X2.2 Characteristics	0,576	0,903	0,624	0,387
X2.3 Self-Concept	0,635	0,876	0,771	0,462
X2.4 Knowledge	0,496	0,817	0,610	0,371
X2.5 Skills	0,240	0,673	0,555	0,506
Z1 Responsibility	0,513	0,705	0,812	0,508
Z2 Work Achievement	0,545	0,772	0,914	0,579
Z3 Opportunity for Advancement	0,396	0,583	0,788	0,480
Z4 Recognition of Performance	0,447	0,615	0,884	0,578
Z5 Challenging Work	0,471	0,575	0,812	0,551
Y1 Work Quality	0,107	0,434	0,583	0,912
Y2 Work Quantity	0,065	0,475	0,580	0,921
Y3 Timeliness	0,103	0,560	0,645	0,937
Y4 Attendance	0,118	0,454	0,553	0,849
Y5 Teamwork Skills	0,023	0,415	0,409	0,733

Table 4 illustrates that each indicator's cross-loading on its designated construct exceeds 0.5, signifying that the dataset possesses acceptable validity. It means that the latent variables serve as appropriate comparators within the research model, or in other words, the combined set of indicators is not unidimensional.

Table 5. Convergent Validity Test Results (AVE)



Variable	AVE	Description
Workload (X1)	0,843	Valid
Competence (X2)	0,707	Valid
Employee Performance (Y)	0,711	Valid
Motivation (Z)	0,763	Valid

All AVE metrics surpass 0.50, reflecting robust convergent credibility, while discriminant validity is assessed via juxtaposition of RSAVE scores against correlations between constructs.

Table 6. Discriminant Validity Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Variable	Workload (X1)	Competence (X2)	Employee Performance (Y)
Workload (X1)	0.918		
Competence (X2)	0.581	0.841	
Employee Performance (Y)	0.566	0.776	0.843
Work Motivation (Z)	0.097	0.539	0.64

Table 6 demonstrates that the constructs Workload, Competence, Employee Performance, and Work Motivation satisfy discriminant validity, as their AVE square roots (bolded) exceed inter-construct correlations.

Table 7. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Description
Workload (X1)	0.938	0.956	Reliable
Competence (X2)	0.893	0.923	Reliable
Employee Performance (Y)	0.898	0.925	Reliable
Work Motivation (Z)	0.92	0.941	Reliable

Table 7 shows that each construct's Composite Reliability and Cronbach's alpha exceed 0.70, indicating that all constructs demonstrate dependable reliability.

Evaluation of Structural Model (Inner Model). The appraisal of the structural schema reveals that it possesses strong elucidative capacity, with Workload and Competence moderately explaining Work Motivation, and all three variables strongly explaining Employee Performance based on R² values. Analysis of direct pathways indicates that Workload inversely and meaningfully influences Work Motivation and Employee Performance, whereas Competence exerts a positive and noteworthy impact on both outcomes ($p < 0.05$). Mediation analysis uncovers that Work Motivation meaningfully channels the influence of Workload and Competence onto Employee Performance, thereby validating all hypothesized paths (H1-H7) and affirming its mediatory function within the model.

Hypothesis Testing. The outcomes from the path analysis and hypothesis evaluation, as displayed in Table 8, reveal the relational dynamics among the constructs; all direct effects were found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level; however, not all hypotheses were supported in terms of direction. The first hypothesis (H1), the hypothesized detrimental impact of Workload on Employee Performance, was not supported, even though Workload (X1) still exerted a significant influence on Employee Performance (Y) ($\beta = 0.306$; $p = 0.003$; $t = 3.008 > 1.96$), the direction of the relationship was positive rather than negative as hypothesized. It indicates that better management of workload is associated with higher employee performance. The second proposition (H2) received empirical support. The findings indicate that competency (X2) exerts a statistically meaningful and



favorable influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.379$; $p = 0.001$; $t = 3.275$). The third assumption (H3) was statistically validated, revealing that work motivation (Z) exerts a strong and significant positive impact on employee performance ($\beta = 0.406$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 4.677$). Likewise, the fourth proposition (H4) confirmed that workload inversely and significantly influences motivation ($\beta = -0.326$; $p = 0.013$; $t = 2.487$), indicating that excessive workload tends to reduce employee motivation. Finally, the fifth hypothesis (H5) was accepted because competence positively and significantly influenced motivation ($\beta = 0.729$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 5.833$).

Analysis of the indirect pathway (Table 8) demonstrates that motivation functions as an intermediary mechanism. The mediated impact of workload on employee performance via motivation reached statistical significance ($\beta = -0.133$; $p = 0.046$), implying a partial mediation effect within this relational chain. Consequently, H6 obtained empirical endorsement. In parallel, competence exerted a positive and statistically robust indirect influence on performance through motivation ($\beta = 0.296$; $p = 0.000$), signaling partial mediation; hence, H7 was likewise substantiated.

In terms of the coefficient of determination, the R-square value for motivation (Z) was 0.361, meaning that workload and competence jointly explained 36.1% of the variance in motivation; the residual 63.9% is attributable to exogenous factors beyond the proposed framework, suggesting that the model demonstrates a reasonably substantial explanatory capacity. The R² for employee performance (Y) reached 0.728, indicating that workload, competence, and motivation collectively accounted for 72.8% of its variability, while the remaining 27.2% derived from external determinants beyond the model's scope. It suggests a strong explanatory power. Furthermore, the Q-square (Q²) value was calculated at 0.591, indicating strong predictive relevance. These findings suggest that the structural framework possesses solid prognostic strength and adequately elucidates the endogenous variables.

Table 8. Hypothesis Test Results

Path Coefficient	t-Statistic	p-Values	Description
Workload (X1) → Employee Performance (Y)	0.306	3.008	0.003
Competence (X2) → Employee Performance (Y)	0.379	3.275	0.001
Work Motivation (Z) → Employee Performance (Y)	0.406	4.677	0.000
Workload (X1) → Work Motivation (Z)	-0.326	2.487	0.013
Competence (X2) → Work Motivation (Z)	0.729	5.833	0.000
Workload (X1) -> Work Motivation (Z)-> Employee Performance (Y)	-0.133	-0.132	0.067
Competence (X2) -> Work Motivation (Z)-> Employee Performance (Y)	0.296	0.293	0.084
R ² Employee Performance:	0,728		
R ² Work Motivation :	0,361		
Q ² :	0,591		

The Effect of Workload on Employee Performance. Workload enhances performance significantly when it is proportionate, systematically defined, and calibrated to employees' capabilities. The strongest workload indicator was the target to be achieved (outer loading = 0.940), while performance was mainly reflected by the quantity of work (outer loading = 0.914). Workload was categorized as fairly good (mean = 3.11), with use of working time scoring highest (3.13), underscoring the importance of time allocation and deadline clarity. These findings support the AMO (Ability–Motivation–Opportunity) theory, suggesting that a balanced workload optimizes ability and sustains motivation. The results are consistent with Putra and Rijanti (2025), Sarmiento and Yustiana (2022), Lutfia et al. (2025), Mutiara et al. (2021), and Iskandar and Sembada (2012), but



differ from Silaban et al. (2021), Kurniawan et al. (2022), Hutabarat et al. (2023), Sari et al. (2024), and Natsir et al. (2025), indicating the relationship is context-dependent.

The Effect of Competence on Employee Performance. Competence exerts a statistically significant positive influence on performance, implying that greater capability corresponds with superior results. The most dominant indicator was motive (outer loading = 0.914). Competence was rated good (mean = 3.55), with motive scoring highest (3.75), highlighting the importance of internal drive. In line with the AMO framework, competence represents the “ability” component that directly enhances performance. Organizations should therefore emphasize continuous training, professional development, mentoring, knowledge-sharing, and strengthening intrinsic commitment. These findings support Kurnia et al. (2025), Wibowo (2016), Opping and Zhau (2020), Krisnawati and Bagia (2021), Rimbayana et al. (2022), Yahya et al. (2023), and Putra et al. (2024).

The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance. Work motivation was found to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, meaning that more motivated employees perform better. The dominant indicator was opportunity for advancement (outer loading = 0.937), while motivation was categorized as fairly good (mean score = 3.30), with responsibility rated highest. Strengthening promotion systems, recognition, performance-based rewards, supportive environments, and clear career paths can enhance motivation. Consistent with AMO theory, motivation transforms ability into actual performance. These findings are supported by Suparman et al. (2026), Ratmono et al. (2024), Nugraha et al. (2021), Kurniawan et al. (2022), Kurniawati et al. (2023), Maimunah et al. (2024), and Natsir et al. (2025).

The Effect of Workload on Work Motivation. The findings reveal that workload exerts a statistically significant inverse influence on work motivation, indicating that excessive workload can reduce motivation, particularly without adequate support and task clarity. From the AMO perspective, an imbalance in workload disrupts the ability–opportunity balance, lowering motivation. Therefore, organizations should ensure proper workload distribution, sufficient staffing, emotional support, and clear job descriptions. This finding is consistent with Putra and Rijanti (2022), Handoko (2019), Astuti and Mayasari (2021), Kurniawan et al. (2022), Hutabarat et al. (2023), Sari et al. (2024), and Natsir et al. (2025), who reported that excessive workload negatively affects work motivation.

The Effect of Competence on Work Motivation. Results indicate that competence exerts a significant positive effect on work motivation; individuals equipped with sufficient expertise and understanding display greater self-assurance, which reinforces intrinsic drive. From an AMO perspective, ability (competence) amplifies motivation, since proficient individuals are more inclined to invest effort and sustain goal pursuit. Organizations can enhance this relationship through competency-based training, structured career planning, certification programs, and continuous professional development. These results are supported by Gazali (2025), Opping and Zhau (2020), Aliyyah et al. (2021), Rimbayana et al. (2022), Yahya et al. (2023), Maulany et al. (2024), and Kustono et al. (2025).

Work motivation is an intervening mechanism linking workload to employee performance. Work motivation serves as a partial mediator in the workload–performance nexus, transmitting a negative indirect effect. While workload directly affects performance, excessive workload reduces motivation, which subsequently lowers performance. This finding aligns with AMO theory, highlighting that an imbalance in workload weakens the motivational component essential for optimal performance. Organizations should therefore maintain proportional workload distribution and adequate support. These findings are consistent with Astuti and Mayasari (2021), Kurniawati et

al. (2023), Aliyyah et al. (2021), Kurniawan et al. (2022), Dewi et al. (2023), Sari et al. (2024), and Natsir et al. (2025).

Work motivation is an intermediary mechanism connecting competence to employee performance. Work motivation also partially mediates the effect of competence on employee performance. Competence enhances performance directly and indirectly by strengthening motivation. In line with AMO theory, competence strengthens the “ability” component, which stimulates motivation and ultimately improves performance outcomes. This result is supported by Spencer & Spencer (2019), Robbins & Judge (2021), Fuad & Aminuddin (2021), Rimbayana et al. (2022), Selfianus et al. (2023), Riyantisa & Survival (2024), and Ndawa et al. (2025), confirming the significant mediating role of motivation.

CONCLUSION

As expectations for superior regional planning intensify, the performance of Functional Planner officials becomes pivotal in safeguarding the effectiveness and accountability of development initiatives in Klungkung Regency. The limited number of planners compared to the ideal requirement has the potential to increase workload, while variations in competence levels and work motivation may influence overall performance outcomes. Accordingly, this research seeks to examine how work motivation operates as a mediating conduit between workload, competence, and the performance of Functional Planner personnel in Klungkung Regency.

The findings indicate that workload enhances employee performance significantly, yet simultaneously diminishes work motivation. In contrast, competence exerts a positive and statistically robust influence on both motivation and performance. Work motivation significantly elevates employee performance. Moreover, it functions as a partial mediator in the linkage of workload and competence to performance, implying that both variables exert direct effects and indirect influences via motivational dynamics.

To ensure sustained enhancement of employee performance, the local government must optimize workload management through proportional task distribution, realistic target setting, and appropriate adjustment of work standards. Competence development can be enhanced through continuous training, further education, and functional position certification. In addition, strengthening the reward system, career development, and periodic performance monitoring should be implemented to enhance employees’ work motivation.

This research is narrowly confined to Functional Planner officials in Klungkung Regency, restricting the generalizability of its conclusions to other regional government entities with distinct organizational profiles. Subsequent inquiries could integrate further determinants of employee performance, including leadership orientation, workplace climate, organizational ethos, or job satisfaction. Additionally, employing mixed or qualitative methodologies could yield a more nuanced comprehension of motivational dynamics and performance patterns within public sector institutions.

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