

# Job Satisfaction as a Mediator Between Work Conflict and Employee Performance

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**Abstract.** This study examines the influence of work conflict on employee performance, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable at PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon. The objective of this research is to test and analyze whether job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work conflict and employee performance. The population consists of 35 employees, and a saturated sampling technique was employed. The analytical tool used in this research is SmartPLS 3.0 with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as the analysis method. The results show that work conflict has no significant effect on employee performance, and it also does not significantly affect job satisfaction. However, job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Furthermore, job satisfaction is proven to mediate the effect of work conflict on employee performance.

**Keywords:** Work Conflict, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance.

## 1. Introduction

Human resources are the primary asset in ensuring the effective operation of a company, not only serving as implementers of organizational activities but also as key determinants of overall organizational success. Without the involvement of competent human resources, even the most advanced facilities, infrastructure, and substantial capital would not yield optimal impact on productivity and business sustainability. Therefore, the management and well-being of human capital must receive serious attention to achieve effective and sustainable organizational goals [1].

One of the main challenges faced by human resources in the modern workplace is the role conflict between job demands and family responsibilities. This phenomenon is commonly experienced by employees who are married, particularly women, who must balance domestic obligations with professional duties. When job demands become excessively high and family responsibilities remain pressing, a clash of roles known as work-family conflict occurs [2]. For example, female employees experiencing intense workloads with inflexible hours often struggle to fulfill parenting roles at home, which can lead to household tension and decreased job performance.

Prolonged role conflict can lead to emotional exhaustion, a psychological condition in which employees feel mentally drained due to continuous work pressures and emotional stress. Employees caught between conflicting work and family roles tend to experience chronic stress that undermines their adaptability, focus, and work commitment. Over time, such conditions negatively affect work morale and task effectiveness [3].

The impact of emotional exhaustion is not only felt at the individual level but also extends to the organizational level. Declines in employee focus and motivation lead to reduced productivity, which directly affects overall organizational performance [4]. If work conflict is not managed systematically, it may result in a toxic work climate, increased absenteeism, and strained coworker relationships. Consequently, it is crucial for company management to understand the dynamics of workplace conflict and implement effective prevention and intervention strategies to maintain organizational stability and performance.

An example of potential role conflict can be seen in the professional lives of female employees in the healthcare sector, such as nurses. Their demanding workloads and shift systems, particularly night shifts, disrupt biological rhythms and physical health [5]. Employees working night shifts face higher risks of fatigue due to misalignment between work schedules and natural rest cycles, which in turn lowers their physical endurance and concentration at work.

In relation to performance, an employee is considered to have strong work performance if they demonstrate high competence, possess strong intrinsic motivation, and receive appropriate compensation. Employees who feel appreciated and perceive clear career advancement opportunities tend to work more optimally, whereas those with low motivation generally exert minimal effort [6]. Hence, creating a supportive work environment—both financially and psychologically—is essential for improving individual and organizational performance.

One of the key factors closely related to performance is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction reflects the level of happiness and acceptance an employee feels toward their work, influenced by perceptions of rewards, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, and supervision [7]. It is shaped by four major aspects: job characteristics, compensation, relationships with superiors, and interactions with colleagues [8]. When management successfully addresses these four aspects, employee satisfaction levels tend to rise, thereby enhancing both loyalty and performance.

In this context, PT. Mutiara Bakery is a home-based industry in Ambon City that produces bakery items such as donuts, bread, and cakes, upholding high standards of cleanliness and quality. Founded in 2017, the company has grown rapidly in response to increasing local demand for baked goods. However, its operational dynamics face serious challenges due to high workloads. The situation worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to workforce reductions, leaving a smaller number of employees to take on extra duties to meet production targets. The high work pressure and imbalanced roles between job and personal life have led to increased role conflict and emotional exhaustion, significantly affecting employee performance.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the impact of role conflict on emotional exhaustion and its effects on employee performance at PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon Branch, while considering the role of job satisfaction as a mediating variable in this relationship.

### **1.1. Work Conflict**

Work conflict refers to a condition of tension or disagreement that arises in the workplace when there are differences in interests, goals, values, or expectations among individuals or between groups within an organization [9]. Work conflict can be either functional or dysfunctional, depending on how it is managed; well-managed conflict can encourage innovation and performance improvement, while unresolved conflict may decrease productivity, disrupt communication, and create an unhealthy work environment. In the context of PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon, the fact that work conflict does not have a significant direct effect on employee performance suggests that, although conflicts exist, their impact is not strong enough to directly reduce employee productivity without the presence of other mediating variables.

### **1.2. Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction refers to the emotional and psychological contentment felt by an employee toward their job, encompassing satisfaction with working conditions, reward systems, relationships with supervisors and coworkers, as well as opportunities for career advancement [10]. High job satisfaction typically fosters motivation, loyalty to the company, and commitment to completing tasks effectively. In this study, job satisfaction is found to have a significant influence on employee performance and also serves as a mediating factor that can buffer the negative effects of work conflict on performance. Thus, when job satisfaction is enhanced, the adverse impact of work conflict on productivity becomes less pronounced.

### **1.3. Employee Performance**

Employee performance refers to the output achieved by an employee in carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities in accordance with the standards and targets set by the organization [11]. Performance can be evaluated based on several indicators, including productivity, work quality, time efficiency, and contributions toward organizational goals. In the context of PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon, employee performance is significantly influenced by job satisfaction, indicating that satisfaction plays a crucial role in achieving optimal work outcomes. Meanwhile, work conflict does not have a direct significant effect on performance without the mediating role of job satisfaction.

## **2. Method**

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. This approach aims to explain causal relationships between the research variables, namely role conflict, emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and employee performance at PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon. A descriptive quantitative method is used to portray phenomena based on numerical data collected from respondents, while the explanatory approach is applied to examine the influence among variables through inferential statistical analysis. The study uses

standardized instruments in the form of questionnaires, developed based on indicators of each research variable, and measured using a Likert scale. The population in this study consists of all employees of PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon. Population is defined as the entire set of subjects or objects possessing specific characteristics determined by the researcher for the purpose of investigation and conclusion. The total population in this study is 35 active employees at the time the research was conducted. Given the small and accessible size of the population, this study adopts a saturated sampling or census method, meaning the entire population is used as the research sample. Thus, all 35 employees of PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon were selected as respondents. The types of data used in this study include both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data refers to numerical data obtained from the distribution of questionnaires to respondents and is analyzed statistically. Meanwhile, qualitative data consists of supporting descriptive information such as organizational background, working conditions, and managerial policies gathered through observation or documentation. Both types of data are utilized to enhance the interpretation of research findings.

The sources of data used in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained directly from questionnaire responses completed by employees of PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon. The questionnaire is constructed based on theoretical indicators of each variable studied. Secondary data is collected through company documentation, internal reports, and literature such as books, academic journals, and other relevant documents that support both the theoretical foundation and the company’s context. The main data collection technique in this study is through closed-ended questionnaires distributed to all respondents. The questionnaire is structured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Questions in the questionnaire are based on operational indicators for each variable—role conflict, emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and employee performance. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire instrument underwent validation by experts and limited pre-testing before being implemented to the target population. After data collection, the analysis process is conducted in two main stages: descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis is used to depict the profile of respondents and the distribution of scores for each variable. Inferential analysis is performed using multiple linear regression to test the effects of role conflict on emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and employee performance. All analyses are conducted with the assistance of statistical software such as SPSS or similar applications, using a significance level of 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). By employing this systematic method and approach, the study is expected to provide a valid and reliable empirical depiction of the impact of role conflict on emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and employee performance at PT. Mutiara Bakery Ambon.

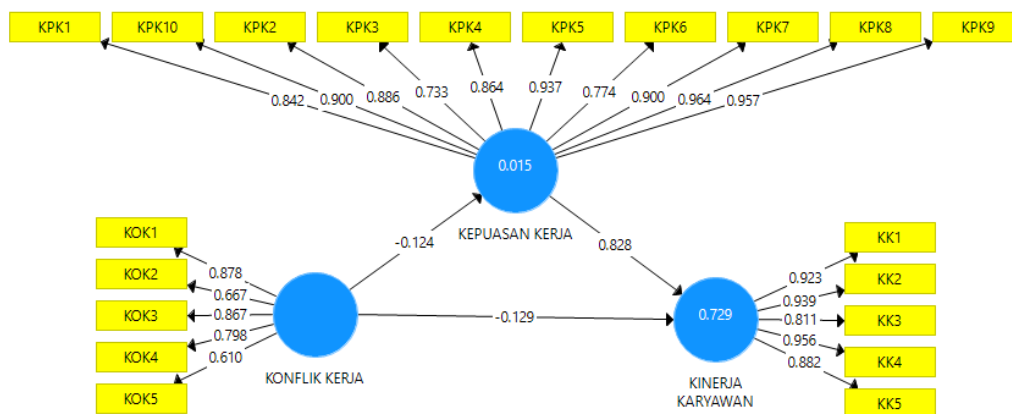
### 3. Result and Discussion

#### Data Analysis Using Partial Least Squares (PLS)

The data processing in this study was conducted using SmartPLS (Partial Least Squares). The model evaluation involved two main stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and evaluation of the structural model (inner model).

#### Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The outer model assesses the validity and reliability of the relationships between indicators and their corresponding latent variables. The figure below presents the outer model, showing the loading factors of each indicator.



**Figure 1.** Outer Model

**Table 1.** Loading Factor Values

| <b>Variable</b>             | <b>Indicator</b> | <b>Loading Factor</b> |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Work Conflict</b>        | WC1              | 0.878                 |
|                             | WC2              | 0.667                 |
|                             | WC3              | 0.867                 |
|                             | WC4              | 0.798                 |
|                             | WC5              | 0.610                 |
| <b>Job Satisfaction</b>     | JS1              | 0.842                 |
|                             | JS2              | 0.886                 |
|                             | JS3              | 0.733                 |
|                             | JS4              | 0.864                 |
|                             | JS5              | 0.937                 |
|                             | JS6              | 0.774                 |
|                             | JS7              | 0.900                 |
|                             | JS8              | 0.964                 |
|                             | JS9              | 0.957                 |
|                             | JS10             | 0.900                 |
| <b>Employee Performance</b> | EP1              | 0.923                 |
|                             | EP2              | 0.939                 |
|                             | EP3              | 0.811                 |
|                             | EP4              | 0.882                 |
|                             | EP5              | 0.589                 |

The results presented in Table 1 show that most of the indicators have loading factor values above 0.70, indicating strong correlations with their respective constructs and thus demonstrating convergent validity. Therefore, all indicators are considered valid and appropriate for further analysis.

**Table 2.** Composite Reliability

| <b>Variable</b>                 | <b>Composite Reliability</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Work Conflict (X1)</b>       | 0.878                        |
| <b>Job Satisfaction (X2)</b>    | 0.970                        |
| <b>Employee Performance (Y)</b> | 0.957                        |

Based on Table 2, all variables have composite reliability values above 0.70. Specifically, Work Conflict is 0.878, Job Satisfaction is 0.970, and Employee Performance is 0.957. This confirms that each construct demonstrates high internal consistency.

**Table 3.** Cronbach's Alpha

| <b>Variable</b>                 | <b>Cronbach's Alpha</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Work Conflict (X1)</b>       | 0.835                   |
| <b>Job Satisfaction (X2)</b>    | 0.966                   |
| <b>Employee Performance (Y)</b> | 0.943                   |

Table 3 indicates that all variables meet the reliability threshold for Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha > 0.6$ ), reinforcing the high level of reliability found in the composite reliability analysis. All constructs are thus deemed reliable for further structural modeling.

**Evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model)**

The inner model evaluation measures how well the theoretical model explains the variance in endogenous constructs, using the R-square values.

**Table 4.** R-Square Values

| <b>Construct</b> | <b>R-Square</b> | <b>Adjusted R-Square</b> |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|

|                             |       |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|
| <b>Job Satisfaction</b>     | 0.828 | 0.824 |
| <b>Employee Performance</b> | 0.728 | 0.715 |

As shown in Table 4, the R-Square value for Job Satisfaction is 0.828, indicating that 82.8% of its variance can be explained by Work Conflict. The remaining 17.2% is explained by other variables not included in this study. For Employee Performance, the R-Square is 0.728, meaning that Work Conflict and Job Satisfaction together explain 72.8% of the variance in Employee Performance, while the remaining 27.2% comes from other factors.

### Direct Hypothesis Testing

The following are the results of direct hypothesis testing conducted using SmartPLS:

**Table 5.** Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis | Construct Relationship                  | T-Statistic | P-Value | Status   |
|------------|---|-------------|---------|----------|
| H1         | Work Conflict → Employee Performance    | 0.910       | 0.363   | Rejected |
| H2         | Work Conflict → Job Satisfaction        | 0.466       | 0.642   | Rejected |
| H3         | Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance | 7.956       | 0.000   | Accepted |

- **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** The p-value of 0.363 is greater than the significance level of 0.05, indicating that Work Conflict does not significantly affect Employee Performance. Thus, H1 is rejected.
- **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** With a p-value of 0.642, Work Conflict is also shown to have no significant effect on Job Satisfaction. Therefore, H2 is also rejected.
- **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** The p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, confirming a positive and significant effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance. Hence, H3 is accepted.

### Mediation Effect Testing

**Table 6.** Mediation Effect Testing

| Hypothesis | Construct Relationship                                  | T-Statistic | P-Value | Status   |
|------------|---|-------------|---------|----------|
| H4         | Work Conflict → Job Satisfaction → Employee Performance | 3.151       | 0.002   | Accepted |

The p-value of 0.002, being lower than 0.05, indicates that Job Satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between Work Conflict and Employee Performance. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is accepted.

## 4. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that work conflict does not have a significant effect on employee performance at Mutiara Bakery Ambon. This means that although high levels of conflict in the workplace may occur, it does not necessarily improve employee performance; in fact, it tends to decrease it. Furthermore, work conflict also does not have a significant effect on job satisfaction, implying that the higher the level of conflict experienced by employees, the lower their job satisfaction will be. On the other hand, job satisfaction has a significant and positive effect on employee performance, which confirms that greater job satisfaction contributes to improved performance among employees at Mutiara Bakery Ambon. Additionally, job satisfaction serves as a mediating variable between work conflict and employee performance. This suggests that increasing job satisfaction can help reduce the negative impact of work conflict, thereby enhancing overall employee performance within the company.

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