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Job Demands and Performance in Public-Sector Policing: Parallel Mediation by Work Discipline and Job Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT: This study examines how workload and job stress are associated with personnel performance in a public-sector police organization through two parallel mechanisms: work discipline as a behavioral self-regulatory pathway and job satisfaction as a psychological appraisal pathway. A quantitative explanatory survey was conducted among 141 personnel of a general criminal investigation directorate in Indonesia using a census approach. Data were analyzed with partial least squares structural equation modeling. Workload and job stress were significantly associated with work discipline, job satisfaction, and performance, while work discipline and job satisfaction were positively associated with performance. All four specific indirect effects were significant and reflected complementary mediation. The model explained 79.1% of the variance in personnel performance. The study contributes to public administration by connecting job-demands theory with rule-compliant behavior in a highly procedural public organization. It shows that demanding work conditions may affect not only how public employees evaluate their work but also their capacity to maintain consistent compliance with rules, procedures, deadlines, and professional responsibilities. The findings support integrated workload, stress, discipline, and job-satisfaction management in public-sector policing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resource performance determines whether public organizations deliver professional, accountable, responsive, and consistent services. In policing, performance encompasses operational results, procedural accuracy, lawful decisions, service quality, and institutional legitimacy (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015). Public-sector performance is multidimensional, shaped by managerial conditions and institutional environments that require efficiency to be balanced with accountability (Brewer & Selden, 2000). Police personnel apply rules, exercise judgment, and serve citizens under resource constraints (Lipsky, 2010). Excessive rules may create administrative burdens, whereas effective rules support fairness, consistency, and organizational goals (Bozeman, 1993; DeHart-Davis, 2009). Work discipline therefore represents the behavioral capacity to maintain procedures and responsibilities under pressure. These challenges are evident in the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, where personnel manage criminal investigations, evidence, documentation, interagency coordination, and public communication. Internal records summarized in the dissertation report 360 police reports in 2023, 313 in 2024, and 369 in 2025, despite relatively stable staffing. Prolonged investigations and simultaneous assignments combine quantitative workload with administrative complexity, time pressure, and legal accountability.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework distinguishes demands requiring sustained effort from resources supporting achievement, motivation, learning, and recovery (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker et al., 2023). Excessive demands may impair functioning when energy consumption exceeds recovery. Police demands include case volume, evidence requirements, deadlines, organizational stressors, interpersonal tensions, public scrutiny, and paperwork (McCreary & Thompson, 2006; Purba & Demou, 2019; Acquadro Maran et al., 2022; Ricciardelli et al., 2023). Occupational stress, resources, satisfaction, and performance outcomes are interconnected (Rauschmayr et al., 2023; Mumford et al., 2025). Workload may nevertheless be challenging or obstructive depending on available resources, while prolonged stress can undermine

concentration, emotional stability, and decision quality (Ganster & Rosen, 2013). Findings remain inconsistent: Indrawati et al. (2025) reported significant links among workload, stress, satisfaction, and performance; Efendi et al. (2025) found no significant direct workload or stress effects on performance; and Prianto et al. (2026) reported a positive, nonsignificant workload–performance association alongside a significant discipline effect. These inconsistencies support examining intervening mechanisms. Existing research emphasizes psychological processes, leaving less attention to how demands disrupt procedural compliance, time management, documentation, and behavioral consistency in highly regulated organizations.

This study integrates JD-R theory with self-regulation and self-control perspectives to explain parallel behavioral and psychological pathways. Self-regulation directs attention, emotion, and behavior toward standards and goals (Bandura, 1991; Carver & Scheier, 1982), while self-control restrains impulses that conflict with longer-term standards (Tangney et al., 2004; Baumeister et al., 2007). Sustained workload and stress may deplete resources needed to prioritize tasks, resist shortcuts, and maintain procedural consistency (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000; Bakker & De Vries, 2021). Work discipline thus captures sustained behavioral regulation under demanding conditions. Job satisfaction represents employees' overall appraisal of their work and organizational membership (Locke, 1976; Cammann et al., 1983; Bowling & Hammond, 2008). Excessive or poorly supported demands may weaken these appraisals, affecting motivation, persistence, involvement, and performance. Police research links work stress with lower satisfaction and associates satisfaction with performance and positive outcomes (Marcos et al., 2020; Rostami et al., 2022; Nelson & Smith, 2024; Mumford et al., 2025). The study contributes a dual-pathway explanation, extends work discipline from a performance predictor to a mediator, and tests parallel mediation in a demanding police investigation context. Eight direct effects and four specific indirect effects capture how workload and stress are associated with performance. Simultaneously examining both pathways helps explain how public organizations can sustain employee functioning and administrative reliability despite statutory obligations, documentation requirements, public expectations, and resource limitations.

1.1 Theoretical background and hypothesis development

1.1.1 Job Demands-Resources Theory and the policing context

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory distinguishes job demands requiring sustained effort and carrying physiological or psychological costs from resources that facilitate achievement, reduce demand-related costs, and support growth and motivation (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In police investigations, demands include simultaneous cases, evidentiary complexity, administrative requirements, deadlines, public expectations, role pressures, interpersonal conflict, and organizational constraints, consistent with documented operational and organizational stressors (McCreary & Thompson, 2006; Queirós et al., 2020; Acquadro Maran et al., 2022). From a public-administration perspective, these demands depend on organizational capacity: reporting rules, deadlines, and service obligations may be manageable with adequate staffing, information, coordination, and leadership support, but become obstructive when resources are insufficient. Organizational arrangements and work context consequently shape employees' performance and job evaluations (Wright & Davis, 2003). Police demands are also interdependent, as increasing caseloads multiply documentation, coordination, citizen contacts, and supervisory requirements, while role and interpersonal stressors compete for attention. JD-R explains this demand-resource structure, whereas self-regulation theory clarifies how attention and behavioral control are allocated across competing requirements. Sustained effort without sufficient recovery may produce fatigue, emotional strain, reduced attention, and lower effectiveness; outcomes nevertheless depend on available resources and whether demands are appraised as manageable challenges or obstructive pressures. Accordingly, this study treats workload and job stress as distinct demand-related conditions embedded in the administrative environment, with discriminant validity results supporting their empirical separability.

1.1.2 Workload and police performance

Workload reflects the quantity, complexity, intensity, responsibility, and time demands associated with task completion. In investigative work it includes the number of cases handled concurrently, case-resolution targets, administrative obligations, public-service pressure, and the requirement to act quickly and accurately. When demands exceed available capacity, employees must divide attention and time across multiple responsibilities, increasing the probability of delay, incomplete documentation, errors, and rework. The dissertation therefore expected workload to be negatively related to personnel performance, while acknowledging that prior empirical results are mixed.

H1: Workload is negatively and significantly associated with police personnel performance.

1.1.3 Workload and the behavioral and psychological pathways

Maintaining work discipline requires continuous monitoring of behavior against rules, procedures, deadlines, orders, and professional responsibilities. Self-regulation theory suggests that employees must allocate attention and cognitive resources to goal monitoring and corrective action (Bandura, 1991). Self-control perspectives further indicate that employees must resist short-term impulses such as postponement, procedural shortcuts, or reduced attention to detail (Tangney et al., 2004; Baumeister et al., 2007). Under high workload, those regulatory resources may be consumed by competing tasks and time pressure. Workload is therefore expected to be related to the capacity to sustain disciplined behavior.

In public organizations, this behavioral pathway is theoretically distinct from both motivation and satisfaction. Rule compliance is not automatically produced by favorable attitudes, nor does it necessarily imply that employees are psychologically satisfied. Public employees may value a rule but struggle to implement it consistently when workload and time pressure exceed available capacity; conversely, they may comply with formal procedures even when they are dissatisfied. This distinction supports the use of parallel rather than serial mediation and is consistent with public-administration research showing that the quality of organizational rules depends on clarity, consistent application, understandable purpose, and appropriate control (DeHart-Davis, 2009).

For criminal investigation, the content of discipline is substantively connected to public accountability. Compliance with standard operating procedures, official orders, timing requirements, documentation rules, and professional responsibility helps preserve traceability and defensibility of administrative action. The construct therefore represents more than punctuality. It captures whether personnel can maintain a reliable pattern of behavior in an environment where procedural errors may have legal, organizational, and public-service consequences. This gives the behavioral pathway a specifically public-sector meaning that differs from generic productivity models.

Workload may also shape global job satisfaction. Manageable and meaningful demands can produce accomplishment, whereas excessive or poorly resourced demands can generate fatigue, frustration, and negative evaluation of the work experience. Global job satisfaction is especially suitable here because it captures the person's overall evaluation of work without duplicating the content of workload and stress measures (Cammann et al., 1983; Bowling & Hammond, 2008).

H2: Workload is negatively and significantly associated with work discipline.

H3: Workload is negatively and significantly associated with job satisfaction.

1.1.4 Job stress and police performance

Job stress emerges when employees experience work pressures as exceeding or threatening their capacity and resources. Stressors in investigation work include uncertainty, role pressure, time constraints, responsibility for evidence and legal decisions, difficult interpersonal interactions, and organizational demands. Prolonged stress can impair concentration, emotional regulation, decision quality, and persistence (Cooper & Marshall, 1976; Ganster & Rosen, 2013). Police research repeatedly identifies organizational and operational stressors as important predictors of well-being and work outcomes (Purba & Demou, 2019; Queirós et al., 2020; Drew et al., 2024). The dissertation therefore proposed a negative relationship with performance.

H4: Job stress is negatively and significantly associated with police personnel performance.

1.1.5 Job stress, work discipline, and job satisfaction

Stress may weaken disciplined behavior because employees under pressure must devote regulatory resources to anxiety, tension, frustration, and emotional control. Persistent stress can make prioritization more difficult, increase haste, and reduce the capacity to maintain procedural detail. The behavioral consequence is not necessarily deliberate noncompliance; rather, it may reflect reduced self-regulatory capacity under demanding conditions. This argument is consistent with the proposition that self-regulation can be strained when demands repeatedly consume attentional and emotional resources (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000; Bakker & De Vries, 2021).

Stress can also alter employees' evaluation of their work. When pressure becomes chronic and difficult to control, work may be experienced as less satisfying even if employees remain committed to the occupational mission. Police research indicates

that work stress and organizational conditions are linked to job satisfaction and well-being (Marcos et al., 2020; Rostami et al., 2022; Nelson & Smith, 2024).

H5: Job stress is negatively and significantly associated with work discipline.

H6: Job stress is negatively and significantly associated with job satisfaction.

1.1.6 Work discipline and job satisfaction as predictors of performance

Work discipline represents compliance with rules, standard operating procedures, official orders, time requirements, responsibility, and consistency. In police investigation, discipline is performance-relevant because the legality and quality of outcomes depend on the process by which evidence, documentation, examinations, and procedural steps are completed. Discipline therefore links organizational standards to observable task execution. Prior studies reviewed in the dissertation generally show a positive relationship between work discipline and employee performance (Hidayat et al., 2025; Ramadhani et al., 2025; Prianto et al., 2026).

Job satisfaction may support performance through motivation, persistence, involvement, and willingness to sustain effort. Personnel who evaluate their work positively are more likely to remain engaged with demanding assignments, maintain constructive interactions, and apply their competencies consistently. The positive satisfaction-performance relationship is also supported in law-enforcement research (Mumford et al., 2025).

Job satisfaction also has a distinct public-sector interpretation. Public employees evaluate not only intrinsic task content but also whether the organizational environment allows them to carry out public responsibilities effectively. Work-context factors such as procedural constraints, role clarity, organizational goals, feedback, and development opportunities can shape satisfaction in government settings (Wright & Davis, 2003). In policing, satisfaction may therefore reflect whether personnel experience their demanding responsibilities as manageable, meaningful, supported, and compatible with professional expectations. This makes job satisfaction an appropriate psychological appraisal mechanism alongside, but conceptually separate from, behavioral compliance.

H7: Work discipline is positively and significantly associated with police personnel performance.

H8: Job satisfaction is positively and significantly associated with police personnel performance.

1.1.7 Parallel mediation: behavioral and psychological mechanisms

The central theoretical proposition is that demanding work conditions can be translated into performance through two different processes. In the behavioral pathway, workload and job stress influence the capacity to maintain rule-compliant, timely, responsible, and consistent behavior. Work discipline then contributes to performance because investigative outputs depend on disciplined execution. In the psychological pathway, workload and job stress shape global evaluations of the work experience; job satisfaction then affects motivation, persistence, and involvement.

The pathways are modeled in parallel rather than serially. This design does not assume that work discipline causes job satisfaction or that job satisfaction causes discipline. Instead, each mediator is treated as a distinct mechanism through which the same demand conditions may be related to performance. This distinction is particularly relevant for highly regulated organizations because psychological evaluation and behavioral compliance may respond differently to the same pressure.

H9: Work discipline significantly mediates the association between workload and police personnel performance.

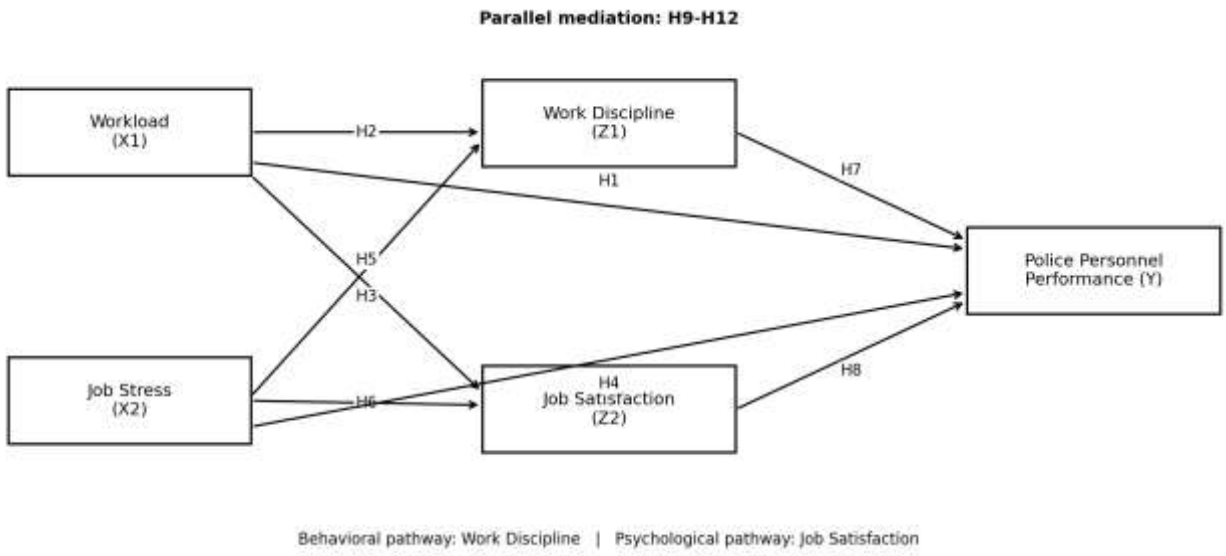
H10: Work discipline significantly mediates the association between job stress and police personnel performance.

H11: Job satisfaction significantly mediates the association between workload and police personnel performance.

H12: Job satisfaction significantly mediates the association between job stress and police personnel performance.

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the parallel behavioral and psychological pathways

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2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Research design and setting

The study used a quantitative explanatory survey design to examine structural relationships among workload, job stress, work discipline, job satisfaction, and police personnel performance. The research was conducted in the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police, Indonesia. The organizational setting includes investigative, supervisory, operational support, identification, planning, and administrative functions, allowing the study to capture perceptions from different components of the directorate.

The organizational setting is analytically important because the directorate combines operational investigation with administrative and supervisory functions. Respondents came from multiple sub-directorates and supporting units involved in investigation, investigative supervision, operational development, identification, planning, and administration. The study did not model unit membership as an explanatory variable; instead, the census design was intended to capture perceptions across the directorate's different functional environments. This breadth is useful for a public-administration analysis because administrative demands can arise from both frontline investigative work and the internal coordination structures that make case processing possible.

2.2 Population, respondents, and data collection

The population comprised all personnel in the directorate who had at least two years of service. The dissertation identified 141 eligible personnel and included all of them using a census approach. Respondents were distributed across eight organizational units. Of the 141 respondents, 120 (85.11%) were men and 21 (14.89%) were women. Education levels included senior high school (35.46%), bachelor's degree (39.72%), master's degree (24.11%), and doctoral degree (0.71%).

The census approach reduced sampling selection within the eligible organizational population, although it does not remove limitations associated with single-organization research. The respondents were predominantly male and represented varied ages, educational backgrounds, ranks, tenure levels, and organizational units. These characteristics were used descriptively rather than as causal controls. The analytical focus remained on the theorized relationships among job demands, the two mediating mechanisms, and performance.

Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire. Respondents selected one of five Likert response categories. The questionnaire instructions stated that positive statements were scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), while negatively worded statements were reverse-scored. The dissertation also states that respondent confidentiality was guaranteed and responses were used for academic research purposes.

2.3 Measures

The measurement model contained five reflective constructs and 69 observed items. Workload was measured with 15 items across five dimensions: simultaneous case handling, case-resolution targets, investigative administrative obligations, public-service pressure, and demands to act quickly and accurately. Job stress was measured with 12 items representing the job itself, role management, interpersonal relationships, and organizational style. Work discipline was measured with 15 items covering compliance with regulations, compliance with standard operating procedures, obedience to official orders, timeliness and orderliness of task implementation, and responsibility and consistency. Job satisfaction was measured with nine items covering enjoyment of organizational membership, general liking of the job, and overall job satisfaction; the dissertation positions this measure as an adaptation of the global MOAQ-JSS logic (Cammann et al., 1983; Bowling & Hammond, 2008). Police personnel performance was measured with 18 items covering work results, individual competence, and contribution to public service.

A critical feature of the original instrument is the wording of the workload and job-stress measures. The dissertation explicitly notes that most X1 and X2 items were written as positive capability statements, often using formulations equivalent to 'I am able to...'. Accordingly, observed scores do not mechanically map onto substantively higher workload or stress. The present article therefore retains the construct labels and the reported PLS coefficients but interprets coefficient direction relative to the operationalization used in the original model. Because the source documentation does not provide a separate item-coding log, the analysis emphasizes the existence, magnitude, and significance of the structural associations rather than treating the sign alone as an unambiguous increase in substantive demand.

Table 1. Construct operationalization

Construct	Items	Dimensions	Operational content
Workload (X1)	15	5	Simultaneous cases; case targets; investigative administration; public-service pressure; rapid and accurate action
Job stress (X2)	12	4	Job itself; role management; interpersonal relationships; organizational style
Work discipline (Z1)	15	5	Rules; SOP; official orders; timeliness/orderliness; responsibility/consistency
Job satisfaction (Z2)	9	3	Organizational membership; general liking of work; overall job satisfaction
Police personnel performance (Y)	18	3	Work results; individual competence; contribution to public service

Source: Authors' synthesis of the theories and research instruments used (2026).

2.4 PLS-SEM analysis

PLS-SEM was performed using SmartPLS. The measurement model was evaluated through indicator loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, and discriminant validity using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). The structural model was evaluated using inner variance inflation factors (VIF), coefficients of determination (R^2 and adjusted R^2), effect sizes (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2) from blindfolding, path coefficients, and bootstrapped significance tests. The dissertation used a two-tailed 5% significance level, with $t > 1.96$ and $p < 0.05$ as the decision rule. Specific indirect effects were used to test mediation. Because the number of bootstrap subsamples is not documented in the supplied dissertation text, it should be inserted from the original SmartPLS project before final journal submission.

PLS-SEM was appropriate for the study's emphasis on explaining variance in multiple endogenous constructs within a model containing two exogenous demand constructs, two parallel mediators, and a multidimensional performance outcome. The analysis proceeded sequentially from the measurement model to the structural model. This separation is important because strong path coefficients cannot compensate for weak measurement, and satisfactory reliability does not by itself establish discriminant validity. The reported evaluation therefore considered indicator reliability, convergent validity, internal consistency, HTMT, structural collinearity, explained variance, effect size, predictive relevance, and bootstrapped significance.

The mediation tests used specific indirect effects rather than inferring mediation from changes in the direct effect alone. Because the direct and corresponding indirect effects remained significant and had the same sign, the dissertation classified the four mediation patterns as complementary mediation. This interpretation indicates that the behavioral and psychological mechanisms account for part, but not all, of the association between the job-demand constructs and performance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Measurement model

All 69 indicators met the loading criterion used in the dissertation. The overall loading range was 0.848-0.918, with construct-specific ranges of 0.869-0.917 for workload, 0.851-0.909 for job stress, 0.848-0.918 for work discipline, 0.855-0.908 for job satisfaction, and 0.865-0.908 for performance. AVE values ranged from 0.767 to 0.799. Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.964 to 0.984, rho_A from 0.964 to 0.984, and composite reliability from 0.969 to 0.985. Thus, the measurement model demonstrated strong convergent validity and internal consistency. The dissertation also cautions that reliability values above 0.95 should be considered alongside the other validity evidence because very high reliability may reflect indicator similarity.

Table 2. Measurement model quality

Construct	Items	Loading range	α	rho_A	CR	AVE
Workload	15	0.869-0.917	0.982	0.982	0.983	0.799
Job stress	12	0.851-0.909	0.972	0.973	0.975	0.767
Work discipline	15	0.848-0.918	0.981	0.981	0.982	0.788
Job satisfaction	9	0.855-0.908	0.964	0.964	0.969	0.775
Performance	18	0.865-0.908	0.984	0.984	0.985	0.790

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS (2026).

Discriminant validity was assessed using HTMT with a conservative threshold of 0.85. All pairwise values were below this threshold, ranging from 0.606 to 0.803. The highest HTMT was between work discipline and performance (0.803), while the lowest was between job stress and job satisfaction (0.606). These results support empirical distinctiveness among the five constructs (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 3. Discriminant validity (HTMT)

Construct pair	HTMT
Work discipline - Workload	0.722
Job satisfaction - Workload	0.680
Job satisfaction - Work discipline	0.700
Performance - Workload	0.795
Performance - Work discipline	0.803
Performance - Job satisfaction	0.784

Construct pair	HTMT
Job stress - Workload	0.627
Job stress - Work discipline	0.628
Job stress - Job satisfaction	0.606
Job stress - Performance	0.721

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS (2026).

3.2 Structural model quality

Inner VIF values ranged from 1.608 to 2.531, indicating that the dissertation found no problematic collinearity among structural predictors. The model explained 55.6% of the variance in work discipline, 49.2% of the variance in job satisfaction, and 79.1% of the variance in performance. Blindfolding produced Q^2 values of 0.431 for work discipline, 0.376 for job satisfaction, and 0.616 for performance, indicating positive predictive relevance for all endogenous constructs. Among the f^2 values, workload had the largest effect on work discipline (0.397), whereas the job-stress effects were comparatively smaller (0.104-0.117).

Table 4. Explanatory and predictive relevance

Endogenous construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Q^2
Work discipline	0.556	0.549	0.431
Job satisfaction	0.492	0.485	0.376
Police personnel performance	0.791	0.785	0.616

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS (2026).

Table 5. Collinearity and effect sizes

Structural path	VIF	f^2	Effect-size category
Workload → Work discipline	1.608	0.397	Large
Workload → Job satisfaction	1.608	0.287	Medium
Workload → Performance	2.437	0.153	Medium
Job stress → Work discipline	1.608	0.117	Small
Job stress → Job satisfaction	1.608	0.104	Small
Job stress → Performance	1.874	0.107	Small
Work discipline → Performance	2.531	0.154	Medium
Job satisfaction → Performance	2.214	0.151	Medium

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS and interpreted by the authors (2026).

3.3 Direct effects and hypothesis tests

All eight direct relationships were statistically significant. In absolute terms, the strongest direct coefficient was the workload-work discipline path (β = -0.532), followed by workload-job satisfaction (β = -0.484). The smallest absolute direct coefficient was the job stress-performance path (β = -0.205), although it remained statistically significant. Work discipline and job satisfaction both had positive coefficients with performance.

Table 6. Direct effects

Hyp.	Path	β	t	p	Decision
H1	Workload → Performance	-0.279	3.473	0.001	Supported
H2	Workload → Work discipline	-0.532	7.803	<0.001	Supported
H3	Workload → Job satisfaction	-0.484	6.783	<0.001	Supported
H4	Job stress → Performance	-0.205	3.096	0.002	Supported
H5	Job stress → Work discipline	-0.289	3.578	<0.001	Supported
H6	Job stress → Job satisfaction	-0.291	5.160	<0.001	Supported
H7	Work discipline → Performance	0.285	3.228	0.002	Supported
H8	Job satisfaction → Performance	0.264	4.794	<0.001	Supported

Source: Primary data processed using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS (2026).

3.4 Specific indirect effects and mediation

All four specific indirect effects were significant. The absolute indirect effect through work discipline was somewhat larger than the corresponding effect through job satisfaction for both workload and job stress; however, the dissertation correctly notes that this descriptive difference cannot be interpreted as a statistically significant difference between mediators without a direct contrast test. Because the relevant direct and indirect effects were both significant and had the same sign, the dissertation classified all four mediation patterns as complementary mediation, equivalent to partial mediation in traditional terminology.

Table 7. Specific indirect effects

Hyp.	Indirect path	β	t	p	Mediation	Decision
H9	Workload → Work discipline → Performance	-0.152	3.159	0.002	Complementary / partial	Supported
H10	Job stress → Work discipline → Performance	-0.082	2.154	0.033	Complementary / partial	Supported
H11	Workload → Job satisfaction → Performance	-0.128	4.358	<0.001	Complementary / partial	Supported
H12	Job stress → Job satisfaction → Performance	-0.077	3.253	0.001	Complementary / partial	Supported

Source: Primary data processed using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS and interpreted by the authors (2026).

3.5 Discussion

3.5.1 Direct effects of workload and job stress

The findings show that the workload construct was significantly associated with performance, work discipline, and job satisfaction. Its strongest relationship was with work discipline, and this relationship also had the largest f^2 in the model. This pattern is important because it suggests that the most visible consequence of demanding case conditions may occur in the process of maintaining orderly, compliant, and consistent behavior rather than only in the final output. The result extends a conventional job-demands interpretation by highlighting behavioral regulation as a performance-relevant outcome.

From a public-management perspective, this pattern suggests that workload is not only a productivity issue but also an administrative-capacity issue. Investigative workload bundles substantive casework with documentation, coordination, citizen communication, and procedural review. When these demands compete for limited time and attention, the consequences may appear simultaneously in output quality, employee appraisal, and the reliability of administrative behavior. The comparatively strong workload-discipline relationship is therefore substantively meaningful for public organizations whose legitimacy depends on both what is accomplished and how it is accomplished.

In an investigative unit, workload is not simply the count of open cases. It also includes evidence complexity, case deadlines, administrative documentation, public-service expectations, and the requirement to act quickly without compromising legal accuracy. These demands compete for finite time and attention. JD-R theory predicts that sustained demands can consume energy and reduce the capacity available for effective task execution (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The present results are consistent with this general proposition, while the especially strong workload-discipline link adds an important behavioral dimension.

The workload-performance relationship is also consistent with studies reporting detrimental workload consequences, although the literature is not uniform. The dissertation compared its result with Indrawati et al. (2025), which reported a significant workload-performance relationship, and with studies reporting nonsignificant direct effects. The mixed literature is precisely why mediation is useful: a job demand can influence performance partly through intervening behavioral or psychological states even when direct relationships vary across contexts.

Job stress was significantly associated with all three endogenous outcomes, but its effect sizes were smaller than those of workload. This does not imply that stress is unimportant. Rather, in this sample and model, stress explained a smaller incremental share of variance after the other predictors were considered. The result remains meaningful in policing because job stress can affect concentration, emotional stability, decision-making, and the ability to maintain attention to procedural detail. Research on policing consistently demonstrates that organizational and operational stressors are linked to well-being and occupational outcomes (McCreary & Thompson, 2006; Purba & Demou, 2019; Queirós et al., 2020; Acquadro Maran et al., 2022).

A methodological caution is essential when interpreting the signs of these paths. The original dissertation notes that many workload and job-stress items are positively framed as the ability to manage demands or pressure. The negative coefficients should therefore be read as inverse structural associations under the scoring used in the original SmartPLS model, not as a mechanically literal statement that every increase in substantive workload or stress necessarily lowers the endogenous outcomes. The reported coefficient magnitudes and significance levels are retained exactly, while substantive interpretation remains anchored to the wording and coding orientation of the measures.

3.5.2 Work discipline as a behavioral self-regulation mechanism

Work discipline was positively associated with performance and significantly mediated both workload-performance and job stress-performance relationships. This is the key behavioral contribution of the study. Work discipline is often modeled as an independent predictor, and prior research reviewed in the dissertation generally supports its positive association with performance (Hidayat et al., 2025; Ramadhani et al., 2025; Prianto et al., 2026). The present model moves beyond that conventional position by asking what work conditions may precede changes in disciplined behavior.

Self-regulation theory provides a useful explanation. Compliance with regulations, standard operating procedures, official orders, timeliness, and administrative responsibility requires ongoing monitoring of one's behavior against organizational standards. Under heavy demands, employees must continuously prioritize, inhibit shortcuts, and correct deviations. Bandura's

(1991) account of self-regulation and the control-theory perspective of Carver and Scheier (1982) both emphasize monitoring and adjustment toward standards. Self-control research similarly suggests that sustained regulatory demands can reduce the resources available for subsequent control (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000; Baumeister et al., 2007).

The significance of the indirect effects indicates that work discipline carries part of the relationship from both workload and stress to performance. For workload, the indirect coefficient through discipline was -0.152; for stress it was -0.082. Because the direct effects remained significant, discipline does not fully absorb the relationships. Instead, it constitutes one pathway among several. This complementary mediation is theoretically plausible in police work: demanding conditions may be associated directly with performance and, at the same time, with the capacity to maintain disciplined processes that support performance.

This behavioral mechanism is especially relevant in organizations where the process is part of the outcome. In criminal investigation, an apparently successful result cannot be separated from legal procedure, documentation quality, evidence handling, timeliness, and accountability. Discipline therefore functions not merely as attendance or obedience but as a mechanism that helps preserve lawful and consistent task execution under pressure. The findings suggest that JD-R applications in highly procedural occupations may benefit from including behavior-regulation variables alongside the more commonly studied psychological mediators.

The finding also connects JD-R to the public-administration distinction between burdensome rules and effective rules. The problem is not that procedural requirements exist; many are essential safeguards. Rather, excessive demand relative to capacity may reduce the ability to implement otherwise legitimate requirements consistently. This interpretation is compatible with DeHart-Davis's (2009) argument that effective organizational rules depend on conditions that make compliance workable and purposeful. For police managers, discipline should therefore not be interpreted only as an individual trait or moral quality. It is also shaped by workload allocation, administrative support, supervisory consistency, and the design of work processes.

3.5.3 Job satisfaction as a psychological appraisal mechanism

Job satisfaction was positively associated with performance and significantly mediated both demand-performance relationships. This pathway represents the psychological appraisal mechanism of the model. Global job satisfaction captures the employee's overall evaluation of work rather than a checklist of specific job facets. That distinction is useful here because workload and job stress are already modeled as characteristics of the work experience; using a global satisfaction measure reduces conceptual overlap with those antecedents (Cammann et al., 1983; Bowling & Hammond, 2008).

Demanding work conditions may alter how personnel interpret their work. When requirements are manageable and supported, difficult assignments can provide challenge, mastery, and professional meaning. When demands become persistent, poorly resourced, or difficult to control, the same work may be appraised less positively. This appraisal can influence motivation, persistence, involvement, and the willingness to sustain high-quality effort. The positive satisfaction-performance coefficient is consistent with the dissertation's reviewed literature and with recent law-enforcement evidence showing links among stress, job satisfaction, resilience, and performance (Mumford et al., 2025).

The indirect effect of workload through job satisfaction was -0.128, while the stress pathway through satisfaction was -0.077. Both were statistically significant and complementary to the direct effects. These findings support the proposition that performance is shaped not only by objective or perceived demands but also by how personnel evaluate the work experience resulting from those demands. This psychological pathway is conceptually distinct from the discipline pathway: satisfaction concerns how employees feel and judge their work, whereas discipline concerns whether they continue to act in accordance with standards and responsibilities.

The parallel structure is therefore informative. A demanding work condition may simultaneously affect how a person evaluates the job and how effectively the person regulates task behavior. A management intervention focused only on satisfaction may leave procedural pressures unaddressed; an intervention focused only on discipline may preserve compliance while ignoring the psychological experience of work. The empirical support for both mediators argues for an integrated view.

For public personnel management, the dual mechanism is useful because it separates two kinds of organizational failure that can otherwise be conflated. A psychological problem occurs when employees increasingly evaluate their work negatively, which can weaken motivation and persistence. A behavioral-administrative problem occurs when employees have difficulty sustaining required procedures and responsibilities, even if they remain committed to public service. The appropriate managerial response

differs: recognition, support, recovery, and job design may be central to psychological appraisal, whereas workload sequencing, administrative assistance, clear standards, and supervisory consistency may be central to behavioral reliability.

3.5.4 Relative pattern of the two pathways

For both demand constructs, the indirect coefficient through work discipline was numerically larger than the indirect coefficient through job satisfaction. The same pattern appears in the direct-effect results, where work discipline had a slightly larger coefficient with performance than job satisfaction. These comparisons suggest that the behavioral route may be particularly salient in the investigated context. However, the dissertation appropriately warns that numerical differences between indirect effects do not establish statistically significant differences between mediators. A formal contrast of indirect effects would be required for that conclusion.

This pattern should be interpreted as evidence about the organizational setting rather than as a universal ranking of mechanisms. Public-sector investigation places unusual weight on procedural regularity because errors can create legal challenges, case rework, delays, complaints, and accountability concerns. In other public organizations, the psychological pathway may be equally or more salient. The value of the parallel model is therefore not the claim that discipline always dominates satisfaction, but the demonstration that a behavioral compliance pathway can be empirically visible alongside psychological appraisal.

The pattern nevertheless has theoretical value. Police investigation is unusually rule-bound, and compliance failures can create legal as well as performance consequences. It is therefore reasonable that the ability to preserve disciplined behavior under demanding conditions is strongly connected to performance. At the same time, job satisfaction remains statistically important and contributes an independent psychological pathway. The two mechanisms should consequently be understood as complementary rather than competing explanations.

3.5.5 Implications for Public Administration and Public-Sector Performance Management

The results have broader implications for public administration because they show how internal work conditions can shape both employee experience and administrative reliability. Public organizations are often expected to increase service output while simultaneously maintaining legality, transparency, procedural consistency, and responsiveness. These objectives can conflict when workload rises faster than staffing, administrative capacity, or recovery opportunities. The present findings suggest that performance systems should therefore monitor not only final outputs but also the conditions under which those outputs are produced. An apparently successful increase in case completion may be fragile if it is accompanied by declining procedural consistency or increasingly negative work appraisal.

A second implication concerns the design of administrative rules. Public-management research warns against assuming that all formal rules are red tape. Some rules are essential for consistency and accountability, but they require sufficient organizational capacity to be implemented reliably (Bozeman, 1993; DeHart-Davis, 2009). In the policing context, standard operating procedures, documentation requirements, evidentiary protocols, official orders, and reporting deadlines are not peripheral bureaucracy; many constitute safeguards around the exercise of public authority. The workload-discipline relationship indicates that managers should examine whether the work system provides adequate time, information, staffing, and administrative support for those safeguards to function as intended.

Third, the results reinforce a relational view of public-sector performance. Personnel performance is not solely a function of individual competence. It is co-produced by the match between job demands, available resources, supervisory arrangements, organizational rules, and employee responses. Brewer and Selden (2000) similarly emphasize that performance in government organizations reflects organizational conditions rather than individual effort alone. For police organizations, this means that performance interventions should not begin and end with stronger targets or closer monitoring. They should also address case allocation, administrative workflow, coordination bottlenecks, clarity of role expectations, and the recovery and support resources available to personnel.

Finally, the dual-pathway model helps reconcile two traditions in public personnel management. One tradition focuses on employee attitudes, motivation, well-being, and satisfaction; another focuses on formal accountability, compliance, and administrative control. Treating job satisfaction and work discipline as parallel mediators shows that these are not competing explanations. A public organization can require both psychologically sustainable work and behaviorally reliable implementation.

This is especially important in frontline and high-discretion settings, where citizens experience government through the behavior of individual officials and where procedural failures can undermine trust even when output targets are met.

3.6 Theoretical implications

First, the study extends JD-R theory by showing that the consequences of job-demand conditions can be interpreted through a behavioral compliance mechanism in addition to the established psychological impairment and motivational mechanisms. JD-R research often emphasizes burnout, engagement, strain, and satisfaction. In a highly regulated organization, however, an equally important question is whether employees can continue to behave in accordance with formal standards when demands intensify. Work discipline provides an empirically supported construct for capturing that issue.

The extension is particularly relevant to public organizations because the cost of depleted self-regulation may be institutional as well as individual. In a private work setting, reduced behavioral consistency may primarily affect productivity or service quality. In a police organization, it may also affect procedural legality, documentation integrity, and the defensibility of administrative action. This gives self-regulation a public-accountability dimension and suggests that JD-R applications in government should pay greater attention to rule implementation as an outcome in its own right.

Second, the integration of JD-R with self-regulation and self-control perspectives creates a clearer micro-process explanation. JD-R identifies demanding work conditions; self-regulation explains how individuals monitor and correct behavior toward goals and standards; self-control explains the inhibition of short-term responses that may undermine longer-term obligations. This integration allows work discipline to be theorized as an adaptive behavioral capacity rather than only as a stable employee characteristic.

Third, the study reframes work discipline as an endogenous mediator. Prior studies typically place discipline as an antecedent of performance. The present findings show that discipline can also be modeled as an outcome of work conditions and as a mechanism carrying part of their relationship with performance. This opens a broader research agenda on the organizational antecedents of disciplined behavior.

Fourth, the study strengthens the role of job satisfaction as a psychological appraisal mechanism. Satisfaction is not only an outcome of organizational conditions; it can be part of the process through which those conditions are translated into performance. The parallel model demonstrates that appraisal and behavioral compliance are empirically distinct and can operate simultaneously.

Finally, the policing context clarifies boundary conditions for these mechanisms. In work that is high-risk, high-demand, and highly procedural, performance cannot be evaluated only by output quantity. Procedural correctness, accountability, and public-service contribution matter. The dual-pathway model is therefore likely to be particularly useful for other rule-intensive public occupations, although this proposition requires testing beyond the present organization.

3.7 Managerial implications

The findings imply that performance management in investigative policing should not rely solely on output targets. Workload distribution should consider case complexity, evidentiary difficulty, administrative burden, coordination requirements, deadlines, and personnel capacity. A numerical equalization of case counts may still produce unequal demands if some cases require substantially more time and cognitive effort.

For senior public managers, the practical implication is to treat workload data as management information rather than merely as evidence of individual busyness. Case counts should be supplemented by indicators of complexity, administrative intensity, coordination load, deadline pressure, and rework. Such information can help identify where formal equality in workload allocation produces substantive inequality in effort requirements. This is consistent with a public-administration approach that seeks to align organizational capacity with statutory and service obligations.

Second, stress management should be integrated into operational management rather than treated only as an individual wellness issue. Role clarity, supervisor support, effective communication, inter-unit coordination, peer support, conflict management, and opportunities for recovery can help personnel cope with pressures that cannot be removed from police work. The aim is not to eliminate all pressure but to prevent persistent demands from overwhelming available resources.

Third, discipline development should go beyond surveillance and sanctions. Because discipline is related to demanding work conditions, leaders should strengthen self-regulatory capacity through clear priorities, realistic deadlines, consistent supervision, SOP reinforcement, administrative support, time-management practices, and leadership example. Discipline is more sustainable when the work system enables compliance rather than merely punishing failure.

Fourth, job satisfaction should be treated as a performance-relevant resource. Supportive leadership, constructive relationships, recognition, development opportunities, adequate facilities, and balanced job demands can help personnel maintain a positive evaluation of their work. This is particularly important in investigative work, where some pressures are structurally unavoidable.

Finally, the behavioral and psychological pathways should be managed together. A unit may maintain short-term output by intensifying supervision, but sustained performance requires both the capacity to comply with procedures and a work experience that personnel can continue to evaluate positively. Integrated human-resource policy should therefore connect workload mapping, stress management, disciplinary development, and job-satisfaction initiatives to performance management.

3.8 Limitations and future research

Several limitations constrain interpretation. First, the study was conducted in one organizational setting, the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation of the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police. Investigative policing has distinctive levels of risk, regulation, accountability, and procedural intensity. Generalization to other police units or public organizations should therefore be cautious.

The study should therefore be read as an organization-level case of public personnel processes rather than as a population estimate for policing generally. Its value lies in testing a theoretically specified mechanism in a highly regulated setting. Replication across police organizations, other law-enforcement functions, and non-police public agencies would help determine whether the behavioral pathway is a general feature of public-sector job demands or a boundary condition of strongly procedural work.

Second, the design was cross-sectional. PLS-SEM identifies structural associations consistent with the proposed model but does not establish how the relationships evolve over time. Longitudinal research could test whether changes in workload or stress precede changes in discipline, satisfaction, and performance.

Third, the measures were primarily based on self-reported perceptions collected from the same respondents. Although convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity were strong, common-source measurement remains a limitation. Future studies should combine self-reports with supervisor-rated performance, objective case indicators, procedural-quality measures, absenteeism, or administrative records.

Fourth, the operationalization of workload and job stress requires particular caution. Many items were positively worded as capabilities to handle demands or pressure. The dissertation itself warns against mechanically equating high or low observed scores with substantively high or low workload or stress. This limits the intuitiveness of coefficient-sign interpretation even though the measurement and structural statistics are clearly reported. Future research should use demand-oriented item wording, or explicitly harmonize score direction before estimation, so that higher construct scores map transparently onto the theoretical meaning of higher job demands.

Fifth, the model includes only two parallel mediators. Other job resources and personal resources - such as supervisor support, organizational support, leadership, competence, resilience, team climate, and recovery opportunities - may buffer or alter the relationships. Future research should test moderated mediation models and examine whether job resources protect behavioral self-regulation and psychological appraisal under demanding conditions.

Sixth, the very high reliability coefficients of several constructs warrant attention. Although the model met convergent and discriminant validity criteria, alpha and composite reliability values above 0.95 can indicate substantial similarity among indicators. Future scale refinement may reduce item redundancy while retaining content validity.

Finally, the indirect effects were compared descriptively but not through a formal statistical contrast. Future work should directly test whether the behavioral pathway is statistically stronger than the psychological pathway and whether that difference varies by unit, rank, tenure, or type of investigative assignment.

Future public-administration research could also move beyond individual-level perceptions by linking personnel survey data to organizational performance records. Multilevel designs could examine whether unit-level workload concentration, supervisory climate, staffing adequacy, or rule characteristics moderate the individual pathways identified here. Longitudinal administrative data could further test whether changes in demand precede changes in discipline-related indicators such as timeliness, documentation corrections, procedural deviations, or rework. Such designs would strengthen causal inference while connecting employee-level mechanisms more directly to organizational accountability outcomes.

4. CONCLUSION

This study develops and tests a dual-pathway model linking workload and job stress with police personnel performance through work discipline and job satisfaction. Using census data from 141 personnel and PLS-SEM, all eight direct paths and four specific indirect paths were statistically significant. The model explained 79.1% of the variance in performance, while both mediators demonstrated meaningful explanatory and predictive roles.

For public administration, the central lesson is that demanding work conditions can influence both how public employees feel about their work and how reliably they implement administrative requirements. These mechanisms matter for different reasons but converge on performance. The study therefore encourages a broader conception of public-sector workforce management in which employee well-being, behavioral compliance, and organizational capacity are managed as interdependent components of sustainable performance.

The central contribution is the distinction between a behavioral pathway and a psychological pathway. Work discipline captures the capacity to maintain compliant, timely, responsible, and consistent behavior under demanding conditions; job satisfaction captures the employee's overall psychological evaluation of the work experience. Both mechanisms partially mediated the demand-performance relationships, indicating that performance in a high-demand investigative environment cannot be understood only from work conditions or only from individual attitudes.

For theory, the findings extend the job-demands perspective by integrating self-regulatory behavior into the explanation of performance. For practice, they imply that sustainable police performance requires a coordinated approach to workload allocation, stress management, disciplined work processes, and job satisfaction. Because many X1 and X2 items were positively worded capability statements, the negative workload and stress coefficients should be interpreted in conjunction with the operationalization and scoring orientation of those measures rather than as self-explanatory substantive increases in demand.

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