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## THE INFLUENCE OF COMPENSATION AND JOB STRESS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE HEALTH SERVICES

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the partial and simultaneous impact of compensation and job stress on the performance of ASN employees at Karawang Health Service.

**Research Methodology:** This study uses a descriptive verification approach with a quantitative approach, using a questionnaire as a survey instrument. The sample consisted of 81 employees, selected according to the Slovin formula. The analysis was performed using a multiple regression model.

**Results:** The results of the study show that compensation has a partial positive effect on employee performance, job stress also has a partial positive effect on employee performance, and that compensation and job stress have a simultaneous positive effect on employee performance in Karawang Health Service.

**Limitations:** The study was conducted only at the Karawang Health Service, and the variables analyzed were limited to compensation and job stress. Future studies could expand the scope and include additional variables.

**Contribution:** This study provides insights for the Karawang Health Service on the importance of managing compensation and job stress to improve employee performance. The findings can be used as a reference for other government agencies to enhance the performance of their employees.

**Keywords:** *Compensation, Work Stress, Employee Performance*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

"In the current era of globalization, improving the quality of Human Resources (HR) is a crucial aspect because it has a significant role in organizational activities" (Raintung et al, 2022). "Well-performing Human Resources (HR) are the key to facilitating the achievement of an organization's vision, mission, and goals. The presence of quality HR is a critical factor that must be prioritized by every organization, because superior HR is needed to complete the tasks given. Without the presence of quality HR, the organization will have difficulty carrying out its role effectively and achieving its stated goals" (Raintung et al, 2022).

“The development of a government agency is highly dependent on the support provided by internal and external parties. Employees, as part of Human Resources (HR), have a very vital role in achieving the goals of the agency, because each agency has goals that must be pursued with the participation of its employees. The presence of employees allows the agency to carry out its activities in order to achieve the stated goals. The importance of having quality employees in a government agency cannot be denied, and their management must be carried out properly so that they can make a positive contribution. This can be achieved by optimizing the knowledge, experience, and skills possessed by each employee”. (Pebri Yulisa & Talib Yunus, 2021).

The Karawang Health Service is a government agency responsible for health affairs, with 102 civil servant employees. Its main task is to support the Regent in carrying out government obligations related to basic services in the health sector. “Employees who achieve satisfactory work results can support the achievement of agency goals. The ability of employees to carry out their duties is reflected in their performance. The success of employee performance can be reflected in the developments experienced by the agency where they work. Therefore, performance can be considered as an indicator of a person's success in completing tasks according to the responsibilities given”. (Fadilah, A., Marnisah, L., & Zamzam, F. 2020)

To evaluate employee performance at the Karawang Health Office, relevant data is needed, especially regarding aspects that have a direct impact on their performance, such as health services, public health, disease prevention and control efforts, and health resource management. The following is data that influences employee performance at the Karawang Health Service that researchers have processed, including the following:

**Table 1.** ASN employee performance data at the Karawang Health Service

NO.	MAIN TASKS	YEAR	TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT
1.	Public Health	2020	100%	89%
	Disease Prevention & Control	2021	100%	90%
	Health Services	2022	100%	85%
2.	Health Resources	2020	100%	85%
	Public Health	2021	100%	79%
	Disease Prevention & Control	2022	100%	89%
3.	Health Services	2020	100%	89%
	Public Health	2021	100%	89%
	Disease Prevention & Control	2022	100%	90%
4.	Public Health	2020	100%	90%
	Disease Prevention & Control	2021	100%	78%
	Health Services	2022	100%	90%

Based on data from 2020-2022, the main tasks at the Karawang Health Office are in a fluctuating state. According to information obtained from interviews with employees in charge of personnel at the Karawang Health Office, the lack of achievement percentage values was due to a decrease in employee work enthusiasm which resulted in decreased employee performance and stress at work. This can be seen from the large number of employees who have negative work attitudes such as lack of time discipline, frequent travel during working hours, lack of responsibility, being too relaxed, not friendly in serving and not in accordance with SOPs. This factor is caused by the low quality of work life provided by the government, such as in the form

of inadequate compensation and a lack of security at work. "Compensation is a form of reward given to employees as recognition of the contribution and performance they provide to the organization"(Enny, 2019).

According to research conducted by Ari Soeti Yani & Rinaldo (2018), there is a significant positive relationship between compensation and employee performance. While research by Murty (2018) shows that there is no effect of compensation on employee performance. Job Stress is a condition where employees are faced with work that has pressure and causes employees to feel uncomfortable with decreased performance in a job. (Mangkunegara, 2019). The phenomenon that has an impact due to work stress at the Karawang Health Service is the value of compensation wages that are not in accordance with the demands of the tasks and demands of the employee's role. The following is data that affects compensation at the Karawang Health Service, including the following:

**Table 2.** Compensation data for ASN employees at the Karawang Health Service

No.	Position	Years of service	Basic salary	Allowance			Facility		Incentives /Bonuses
				BPJS Health	Taspen	THR	Official Vehicle	Employee training	
1.	Head of Service	60 Years	Rp. 7.100.000,-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	Secretary of Service	58 Years	Rp. 6.400.000,-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3.	Head of General Affairs & Personnel	58 Years	Rp. 4.100.000,-	✓	✓	✓		✓	
4.	Head of Finance	58 Years	Rp. 5.100.000,-	✓	✓	✓		✓	
5.	Sub-Coordinator of Program & Reporting	58 Years	Rp. 5.000.000,-	✓	✓	✓		✓	

Furthermore, the results of previous studies examining the work stress variable (X2) by Saputra & Wijayaningsih (2022) showed that work stress had a significant effect on the performance of non-medical employees at Satria Medika Hospital. However, these findings contradict the results of a study conducted by Nila Hotinha & Febriansyah (2018), stating that work stress had no effect on the performance of nurses at Selasih Hospital, Pelalawan Regency. The purpose of this study was to identify the impact of compensation and work stress on the performance of Civil Service (ASN) employees of the Karawang Health Service, both individually and as a whole. From the gaps in research and the problems identified, there is a need to investigate the impact of compensation and work stress on employee performance.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

### *Human Resource Management*

"Human Resource Management is a series of policies and actions required for individuals responsible for the "people" or workforce aspects from a managerial perspective, including the recruitment, selection, training, compensation, and evaluation processes". (Dessler, 2019). In the journal (Budi Rismayadi, 2023), defines "Human Resource Management is a function that

aims to plan, implement, recruit, train, and develop employee careers". In the journal (Wike Pertiwi, 2023) defines "Human Resource Management involves the process of managing the workforce through recruitment planning, selection, training, development, compensation, career management, safety, and health, and management of industrial relations until termination of employment, with the aim of achieving agency goals and improving welfare".

From the description above, it can be synthesized that Human Resource Management (HRM) is a strategic field in planning, organizing, implementing & supervising, and coordinating the workforce in utilizing humans as an effective workforce and developing employee competencies to achieve a goal in an organization/agency.

### **Organizational Behavior**

"Organizational behavior is a branch of research that examines the influence of individuals, groups, and structures on behavior within an organization, with the intention of using that knowledge to improve organizational performance". (Rahmi Widyanti, 2019). "Organizational behavior is a field of research that focuses on the actions of individuals within an organization and their impact on organizational performance". (Maziyah Bilqis, 2021). "Organizational behavior is a subject in the domain of study that explores how organizational structures influence behavior within them, examining the influence of individuals, groups, and structures on human behavior in an organizational context" (Ismie Fauziah, 2020).

Based on various definitions from experts, it can be synthesized that organizational behavior is the attitude and behavior of individuals which is the core of behavioral science, with a primary focus on how humans act in an organizational context.

### **Compensation**

"Compensation refers to all forms of income in the form of money or goods, either directly or indirectly, received by employees in return for services provided to the company or agency". (Hasibuan, 2019). In the journal (Budi Rismayadi, 2023) defines "Compensation refers to various forms of reimbursement, both in the form of money and other types, received by employees as an appreciation for their services and contributions to the company or agency where they work". "Compensation is a reward given to employees as an appreciation for their contributions and work to the organization. The reward can be in the form of money directly or indirectly, and the award can also be indirect" (Enny, 2019).

Based on the understanding of various experts, it can be synthesized that compensation is an important function in management that is implemented by organizations or government agencies as a form of recognition of the services provided by each employee, according to the contribution and performance they provide to the organization or agency.

The following are indicators used in compensation according to Simamora (2020):

1. Wages / Salary. Wages or salary are a form of payment generally given by companies or agencies to employees as a sign of gratitude for the work that has been done.
2. Incentives/Bonuses, are additional compensation inside or outside of salary that comes from the company or agency.
3. Allowances, are a form of insurance such as mental health, pension programs, leave, provided by the company or agency and related to employment.

4. Facilities, refer to everything available for use and enjoyment by employees, which are intentionally provided to support the implementation of work.

### **Work Stress**

In the journal (Budi Rismayadi, 2023) defines "Work stress is a result that arises from emotional drives experienced by a person towards their work due to the inability to meet work demands". In the journal (Wike Pertiwi, 2023) defines "Work stress is a condition of tension that results in physical and mental imbalances that affect emotions, thought processes, and the overall condition of employees". "Work stress is the pressure felt by employees in carrying out their work. Symptoms of work stress include emotional changes, anxiety, desire to be alone, sleep disturbances, excessive tobacco consumption, difficulty relaxing, feelings of anxiety, tension, nervousness, increased blood pressure, and digestive problems" (Mangkunegara, 2019).

From the various explanations by the experts above, it is synthesized that work stress is an unpleasant condition experienced by a person while working, which is caused by pressure that interferes and affects both psychologically and physically. Work stress is an individual's response to tasks that are considered too difficult for employees to overcome, causing discomfort and dissatisfaction with their work.

According to Robbins (in Jafar, 2018), the following are indicators of Job Stress:

1. Task demands, are factors related to individual work, such as working conditions and the structure of tasks that must be done.
2. Role demands, are related to the pressure a person receives in their role in the organization.
3. Interpersonal demands, are pressures that arise from interactions with coworkers.

### **Performance**

In the journal (Wike Pertiwi, 2022) states "Performance is the achievement or level of success of a person in carrying out tasks during a certain period of time, compared to standards, targets, or criteria that have been previously set and agreed upon". "Performance is the result of work and work behavior that has been successfully achieved in carrying out the tasks and responsibilities given within a certain period of time". (Kasmir, 2019) In the journal (Wike Pertiwi, 2023) defines "Performance refers to the achievements obtained by an employee in carrying out the responsibilities given, measured based on certain standards".

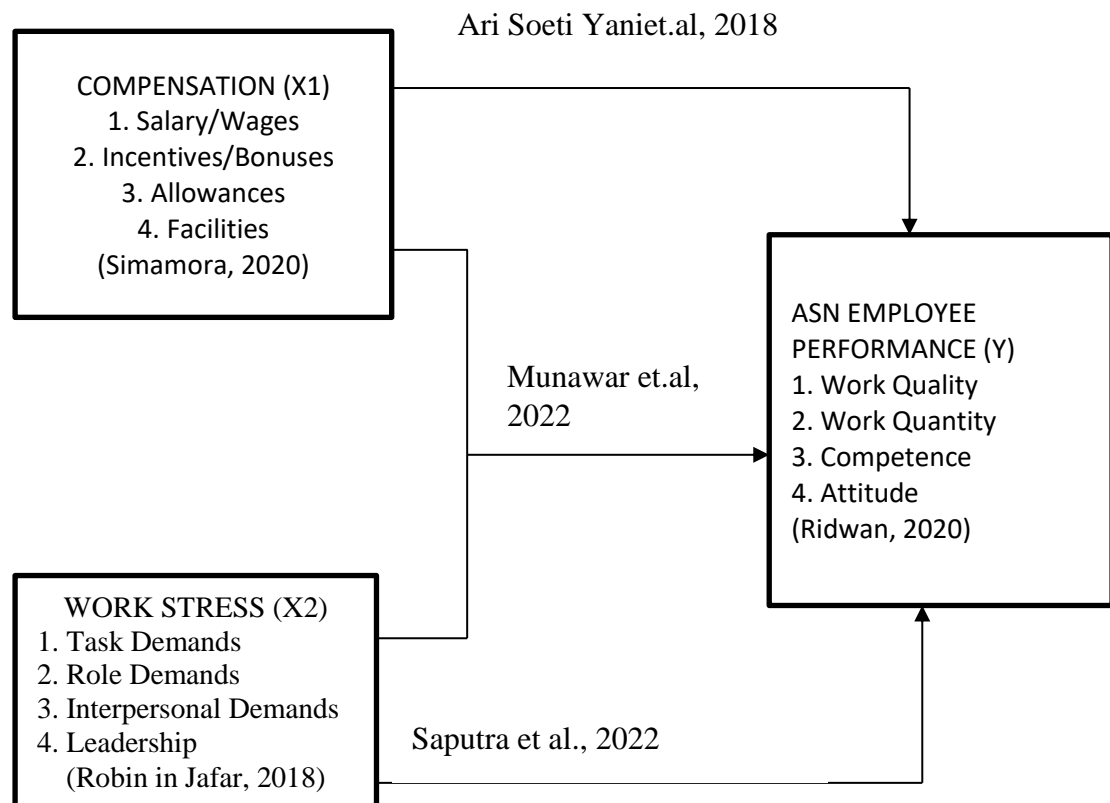
Based on several definitions by experts, it can be synthesized that performance is the result or achievement of activities that have been carried out by a person, including reliability, innovation, and efficiency within a certain period of time, both for companies and agencies.

The following are indicators used in performance according to Ridwan (2020):

1. Quality of work, can be seen through an understanding of the work environment, understanding of the responsibilities and authorities given, speed, accuracy, skills, and cleanliness.
2. Quantity of work, refers to the amount of work that must be completed in a certain period of time, and can be seen from achievements, target achievement, results, and speed.



3. Consistency, can be observed from the individual's ability to continue to develop themselves, maintain good physical health, obedience to instructions, initiative, alertness in work, and punctuality in completing tasks.
4. Attitude, reflected in the way individuals interact with other agencies and institutions, personal strengths, empathy, dedication, and responsiveness in carrying out tasks.



**Figure 1.** Thinking Framework

### **Hypothesis Development**

Simamora (2020) "Hypothesis is a temporary answer to the formulation of research problems, where the formulation of research problems has been stated in the form of a question sentence. It is said to be temporary, because the answers given are only based on relevant theories, not yet based on empirical factors obtained through data collection".

The hypothesis from the framework of thought above is the relationship between Compensation & Work Stress on Employee Performance, described as follows:

1. Temporary assumption Work compensation has a partial effect on the performance of ASN employees at the Karawang Health Office.
2. Temporary assumption Work stress has a partial effect on the performance of ASN employees at the Karawang Health Office.
3. Temporary assumption Simultaneously, compensation and work stress affect the performance of ASN employees at the Karawang Health Office.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach method. To determine the sample, the researcher applies a descriptive verification approach to determine the number of samples to be investigated. Data collection was carried out through the use of closed questionnaires.

#### B. Population

Population is an object or subject with a certain number of characteristics determined in the study to be studied & conclusions drawn. The population of this study was 102 civil servant employees of the Karawang Health Service.

#### C. Sample

The sample is a representation of the number and characteristics possessed by the population. The sample is taken representatively to represent the population as a whole. In this study, the sample consisted of 81 civil servant employees. The sampling method uses the Slovin formula with the following calculations:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$
$$n = \frac{102}{1 + 102(0,05)^2}$$
$$n = \frac{102}{1,255}$$
$$n = 81$$

#### D. Sampling Technique

Sampling is a method of taking samples to determine samples in research. In this study, the sampling technique uses simple random sampling with the Slovin formula, which will determine the sample size of a population whose number is already known.

#### E. Data Collection Technique

The research method uses interviews, observations, and questionnaires. The questionnaire is used to explore respondents' opinions, where respondents only need to choose the answer options that have been provided. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents, namely employees of the Karawang Health Office, via the Google Form platform.

#### F. Data Sources

The data for this study is divided into primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through a survey at the Karawang Health Office, which is the focus of the study. This data is obtained from observation, interviews, and filling out questionnaires. However, secondary data is supporting data from various sources such as the history and profile of the

Karawang Health Office, journals relevant to the research variables, and the results of previous studies.

**Table 4.** Operational Variable Table

Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Scale	Questionnaire items
Compensation (X1) According to Simamora (2020)	Direct	Wages/Salary	Ordinal	1, 5, 6
	Financial	Incentives/Bonuses		2, 7
	Compensation	Allowances		3, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15
	Indirect	Facility		4, 10, 11, 12
Job Stress (X2) According to Robbins in Jafar (2018)	Internal	Task Demands	Ordinal	1, 4, 5, 6, 15
	Agency	Role Demands		2, 9, 11, 12, 14
	External	Interpersonal		3, 7, 8, 10, 13
	Agency	Demands		
Performance (Y) According to Ridwan (2020)	Work Results	Task Demands	Ordinal	1, 2, 8
	Responsibility	Quality of Work		5, 12, 14
		Quantity of Work		3, 4, 7, 10, 13, 15
	Discipline	Consistency		6, 9, 11
		Attitude		

### G. Analysis Technique

The method in this research analysis uses multiple regression analysis, describing the relationship between the response variable (Y) and the predictor factors (X1, X2) that influence it more than one.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1. Results

Variable	Pernyataan	Total Pearson Correlation	r Table	Status
Compensation (X1)	X1.1	0,727	0,361	Valid
	X1.2	0,573	0,361	Valid
	X1.3	0,541	0,361	Valid
	X1.4	0,573	0,361	Valid
	X1.5	0,702	0,361	Valid
	X1.6	0,628	0,361	Valid
	X1.7	0,668	0,361	Valid
	X1.8	0,541	0,361	Valid
	X1.9	0,550	0,361	Valid
	X1.10	0,627	0,361	Valid



Variable	Pernyataan	Total Pearson Correlation	r Table	Status
	X1.11	0,840	0,361	Valid
	X1.12	0,727	0,361	Valid
	X1.13	0,722	0,361	Valid
	X1.14	0,702	0,361	Valid
	X1.15	0,840	0,361	Valid
	X2.1	0,736	0,361	Valid
	X2.2	0,736	0,361	Valid
	X2.3	0,539	0,361	Valid
	X2.4	0,773	0,361	Valid
	X2.5	0,773	0,361	Valid
	X2.6	0,539	0,361	Valid
	X2.7	0,644	0,361	Valid
	<b>Job Stress (X2)</b>			
	X2.8	0,736	0,361	Valid
	X2.9	0,539	0,361	Valid
	X2.10	0,644	0,361	Valid
	X2.11	0,539	0,361	Valid
	X2.12	0,543	0,361	Valid
	X2.13	0,773	0,361	Valid
	X2.14	0,511	0,361	Valid
	X2.15	0,736	0,361	Valid
	Y.1	0,643	0,361	Valid
	Y.2	0,823	0,361	Valid
	Y.3	0,731	0,361	Valid
	Y.4	0,736	0,361	Valid
	Y.5	0,669	0,361	Valid
	Y.6	0,805	0,361	Valid
	Y.7	0,518	0,361	Valid
	<b>Performace (Y)</b>			
	Y.8	0,801	0,361	Valid
	Y.9	0,821	0,361	Valid
	Y.10	0,763	0,361	Valid
	Y.11	0,768	0,361	Valid
	Y.12	0,701	0,361	Valid
	Y.13	0,703	0,361	Valid
	Y.14	0,755	0,361	Valid
	Y.15	0,501	0,361	Valid

In table 5, the results of the study show that each statement in the variable is considered valid. Based on the figures obtained from the Total Pearson Correlation > r Table (df: 30-2 = 28) of 0.361. Because the figure is > 0.361, each variable can be considered valid.

**Table 6.** Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Status
Compensation (X1)	.900	15	Reliable
Job Stress (X2)	.908	15	Reliable
Performance (Y)	.929	15	Reliable

In table 6, the results of the reliability test on the assessment of the questionnaire variables above show that the value of each questionnaire obtained Cronbach's Alpha > 0.6. Furthermore, it can be summarized that the questionnaire in this study can be considered reliable.

**Table 7.** Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			Unstandardized Residual
N			81
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean		,0000000
	Std. Deviation		5,20930908
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		,058
	Positive		,058
	Negative		-,043
Test Statistic			,058
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) <sup>c</sup>			,200 <sup>d</sup>
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) <sup>e</sup>	Sig.		,717
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	,705
		Upper Bound	,728

a. Test distribution is Normal.  
b. Calculated from data.  
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.  
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.  
e. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.

In table 7, the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test model obtained data with a sig level value greater than 0.05, which is 0.200. This means that these variables are normal and meet the normality assumption.

### 1. Compensation Descriptive (X1)

In the compensation variable (X1) in this study, it is included in the high category, as indicated by the TCR value of 73.3. The lowest TCR value is in the allowance indicator, which is 69.1.

### 2. Work Stress Descriptive (X2)

In the work stress variable (X2) in this study, it is included in the high category, as indicated by the TCR value of 72.4. The lowest TCR value is in the role demands, task demands, and interpersonal demands indicators, which is 69.1.

### 3. Performance Descriptive (Y)

In the performance variable (Y) in this study, it is included in the high category, as indicated by the TCR value of 75.8. The lowest TCR value is in the work quantity indicator, which is 70.

**Table 8.** Partial t-Test

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	33,486	3,104		,000
	Compensation	,273	,045	,482	,001
	Work Stress	,214	,040	,433	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Based on the output results in the coefficients table, the value of the calculated t is  $6.015 > t$  table 1.990 and the significance value (Sig.)  $0.001 < 0.05$ , it is concluded that "Compensation (X1) has a significant effect on Performance (Y)". And in the output results in the coefficient table, the value of the calculated t is  $5.401 > t$  table 1.990 and the significance value (Sig.)  $0.001 < 0.05$  is concluded that "Work Stress (X2) has a significant effect on Performance (Y)".

**Table 9.** Simultaneous f-test

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
1	Regression	588,647	2	294,324	,000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	494,885	78	6,345	
	Total	1083,532	80		

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Job Stress, Compensation

Based on the output in the ANOVA table, the value of the calculated F is  $46.389 > F$  table 3.11 and the significance value is  $0.001 < 0.05$ , so it can be concluded that "Compensation (X1) and Work Stress (X2) have a significant effect on Performance (Y)".

**Table 10.** Determination Coefficient

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,737 <sup>a</sup>	,543	,532	2,519

a. Predictors: (Constant), JOB STRESS, COMPENSATION

Based on the results of the model summary table output, the Adjusted R Square value (determinant coefficient) is 0.532, meaning that the independent variable (X) has an effect on the dependent variable (Y) of 53.2%.

## 4.2. Discussions

### *Compensation for Performance*

The results of statistical analysis show that the compensation variable (X1) has a positive and significant effect on the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service. It can be seen from the partial hypothesis testing that the significance level is  $0.001 < 0.05$  and the t value is  $6.015 > t \text{ table } 1.990$ . This shows that an increase in compensation will improve the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service.

### *Work Stress on Performance*

From the statistical analysis, it shows that the work stress variable (X2) has a positive & significant effect on the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service. It can be seen from the results of the partial hypothesis testing that the significance level is  $0.001 < 0.05$  and the t value is  $5.401 > t \text{ table } 1.990$ . This shows that every decrease in work stress will reduce the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service.

### *Compensation and Work Stress on Performance*

The results of statistical calculations, both independent variables, namely compensation and work stress, are proven to have an effect on the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service. It can be seen that the results of simultaneous hypothesis testing show a significance level of  $0.001 < 0.05$  and a calculated F value of  $46.389 > F \text{ table } 3.11$ . This shows that an increase in compensation and a decrease in work stress can create good performance.

## 5. CONCLUSION

From the results of the study that have been explained previously, the conclusion that can be drawn is that compensation has a partial effect on the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service, work stress also has a partial effect on the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service, and simultaneously compensation and work stress have an effect on the performance of ASN employees of the Karawang Health Service. Based on the compensation variable, namely allowances, the Karawang Health Service should improve the quality of allowances so that employees feel safe at work and can increase their work enthusiasm. In the work stress variable, namely role demands, task demands, & interpersonal demands, the Karawang Health Service should be able to create a better work environment. In the performance variable, namely work quantity, the Karawang Health Service should make strict rules regarding being late for work. Further research should be able to further explore other variables that have the potential to influence employee discipline towards performance, or use research variables that are different from this study that may have an impact on the performance of Karawang Health Service employees.

## LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

The present study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study was conducted only at the Karawang Health Service, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other government agencies. Future studies could expand the scope and include other government organizations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the variables.

Second, the study focused on only two variables, namely compensation and job stress, as predictors of employee performance. There are likely other factors that could influence employee performance, such as organizational culture, leadership, and job satisfaction, which were not included in this study. Future researchers may want to explore the impact of these additional variables on employee performance.

Third, the study utilized a cross-sectional research design, which provides a snapshot of the relationships at a specific point in time. A longitudinal study could provide deeper insights into the dynamic nature of the relationships over time.

Study Forward: To address the limitations of the current study, several recommendations for future research are proposed:

1. Expand the scope of the study to include other government agencies, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between compensation, job stress, and employee performance in the public sector.
2. Incorporate additional variables, such as organizational culture, leadership, and job satisfaction, to provide a more holistic view of the factors influencing employee performance.
3. Adopt a longitudinal research design to investigate the dynamic relationships between the variables over time, which could yield valuable insights into the long-term effects of compensation and job stress on employee performance.
4. Utilize a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data, to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that shape the relationships between the variables.

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