(RESEARCH ARTICLE)

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The effect of human resource management on workload-mediated performance in inpatient health workers in Mental Hospitals in Southeast Sulawesi Province

Dewi Sartika, I Putu Sudayasa* and Ruslan

Faculty of Public Health, Master of Public Health Program, Halu Oleo University, Address: Jl. H. E. Mokodompit, Anduonohu, Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia.

Abstract

The workload of health workers in the inpatient room of the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital is still relatively high, as can be seen from the imbalance in the ratio of nurses and patients, the complexity of tasks, and the achievement of service indicators that are not optimal. This study aims to analyze the influence of HR management on performance, as well as examine the role of workload as a mediating variable in inpatient health workers. The study used an analytical survey design with a cross-sectional approach involving 91 respondents who were selected purposively. Data was collected through a questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling based on Partial Least Square (PLS) through the SmartPLS 3 application. The results showed that HR management had a positive and significant effect on workload (β = 0.249; t = 2.364; p = 0.018) and had a very significant effect on performance (β = 0.627; t = 8.797; p = 0.000). Workload also has a positive and significant effect on performance (β = 0.150; t = 1.990; p = 0.047), indicating that managed workload can serve as a challenge stressor that drives motivation and performance. The R^2 value shows that HR management explains 6.2% of workload variance, while HR management and workload together explain 46.2% of performance variance. A Q^2 value of 0.495 indicates that the model has strong predictive relevance. The research concluded that strengthening human resource management, especially planning, organizing, motivation, and evaluation in managing workloads and improving the performance of health workers. These findings can be the basis for HR policies related to shift management, competency improvement, and optimization of workload distribution to support the quality of mental health services.

Keywords: HR Management; Workload; Performance; Health Workers

1. Introduction

Health Human Resources (HR) play a central role in ensuring the quality of services in hospitals, including psychiatric hospitals (Anjani et al., 2024). The health human resource management policy has been regulated in Law No. 36 of 2009 concerning Health which contains a general legal basis that regulates all aspects of health in Indonesia, including health human resources. Also in Law No. 36 of 2014 concerning Health Workers which regulates specifically health workers, including type, education, competence, and authority. HR policies such as recruitment, training, placement, shift and scheduling arrangements, compensation, and performance evaluation mechanisms are the foundation for health workers to work effectively and efficiently. Without a good HR policy, various problems can arise imbalances between workload and labor capacity, demotivation, stress, and loss of focus on service quality (Susilowati & Surhati, 2024).

The workload of inpatient HR is a very critical variable. The workload includes quantitative (number of patients, hours worked, patients per nurse) and qualitative (patient complexity, disease severity, special care needs) aspects that are often overlooked or not optimally managed (Chen et al., 2024). In a study at the Arifin Achmad Regional General Hospital Pekanbaru, it was shown that in the morning and evening shifts, the workload of inpatient nurses in the operating room

* Corresponding author: I Putu Sudayasa

was very high, around 89%-82%, while on the night shift it was lighter. (Nathasya et al., 2023). A Meta-Analysis study confirms that high workloads consistently found a decrease in nurse performance in various hospitals (Zamani et al., 2025). Other studies show that nurses are required to give their best performance in providing services regardless of the patient's status. Nurses must always be at the forefront of providing services so that patients get the best service (Fauzi et al., 2023).

In the current condition, there are not many studies that explicitly discuss HR management policies as a variable that can control or mediate workload and affect performance. Most of the research focus is still on the direct relationship between workload to performance or other external stresses/stimuli. Policies such as workforce need planning, recruitment, work distribution, training, shift schedules, rewards/punishments have not been comprehensively measured as system/organizational policies.

Southeast Sulawesi Province Mental Hospital is a type B specialty hospital that handles mental health in Southeast Sulawesi Province. The number of psychiatrists who provide services at the hospital is 4 people while the number of inpatient health workers, namely nurses in 2025, is 117 people, while outpatient nurses are 5 people. Meanwhile, data in 2022 shows that the overall number of inpatients is 1,087 people. In 2023, it decreased to 1001 people. Furthermore, in 2024, the number of inpatients will be recorded at 1030 people. In 2025 in the first and third quarters, the total number of hospitalized patients will be 866. (RSJ Prov. South Sulawesi, 2024). If you look at the comparison, in 2022 the ratio between nurses and patients in the inpatient is 1 : 9, the ratio in 2023 is 1 : 8, in 2024 the ratio of nurses and patients in the inpatient room is 1 : 8. This is still above the national standard where in the standard inpatient room the ratio of nurses to patients is 1 : 5.

Data from the 2024 Patient Safety Quality Improvement Accreditation Working Group recorded that the indicator of minimum service standards that has not been achieved in inpatient care is the number of nursing personnel that is not balanced with the number of patients, where there are more patients than patients in the inpatient room, so the workload is felt to be very large. The average attendance of hospitalized health workers has only reached 88% and has not reached 100% as targeted (Working Group of PMKP Psychiatric Hospital of South Sulawesi, 2024).

Initial interviews with 10 nurses in the inpatient room found that 7 people agreed that the workload of nurses was very large, moreover, nurses were still lacking in the inpatient room. Meanwhile, 3 people said it was not heavy because they felt helped by their guardians. Performance interviews are known that, once every 3 months there is a meeting led by the Head of Nursing to monitor the implementation of health services to patients and identify problems that arise in hospitalization. In addition, interviews related to attendance, it is known that the presence of health workers in the inpatient is not optimal as targeted by minimum service standards, this will certainly increase the workload for colleagues who are on the same schedule, considering that mental patients are fluctuating patients where emotional conditions can change at any time.

Gaps or real phenomena in the field show that the performance of hospitalizations in mental hospitals is not optimal. This can be seen in reports that health workers arrive on time, start shifts late, or frequent changes of medical personnel due to fatigue and high workload. In addition, nursing service standards are often not met, such as the frequency of patient assessments, documentation, and therapeutic interactions that do not run in accordance with institutional guidelines and professional regulations. Although significant quantitative studies have shown a link between workload and performance, specialized studies in psychiatric hospitals, with the position of workload as an intervening variable between HR policy and performance, are still limited.

2. Material and methods

The type of research used in this study is analytical survey research. The design used was a cross sectional study. The population in this study is the number of all health workers in the inpatient room of the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital in 2025 which is 117 people and the number of samples sampled is 91 respondents using the purposive sampling technique

The determination of the sample criteria in this study consisted of inclusion criteria: Health workers who work in the inpatient room of the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital, Have a minimum working period of 6 months in the inpatient unit, Permanent employment status, contracts, or honorary employees who are actively working, Willing to be respondents and fill out the research questionnaire. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria set are health workers who are on leave, leave or sick, have not worked for 6 months in an inpatient room, have an inactive practice permit, and are not willing to be respondents. Measuring instruments in research are usually called research instruments.

Questionnaires as instruments were compiled by researchers based on theoretical reviews. The research data that has been collected is then analyzed. The data is analyzed and interpreted further using SmartPLS 3.
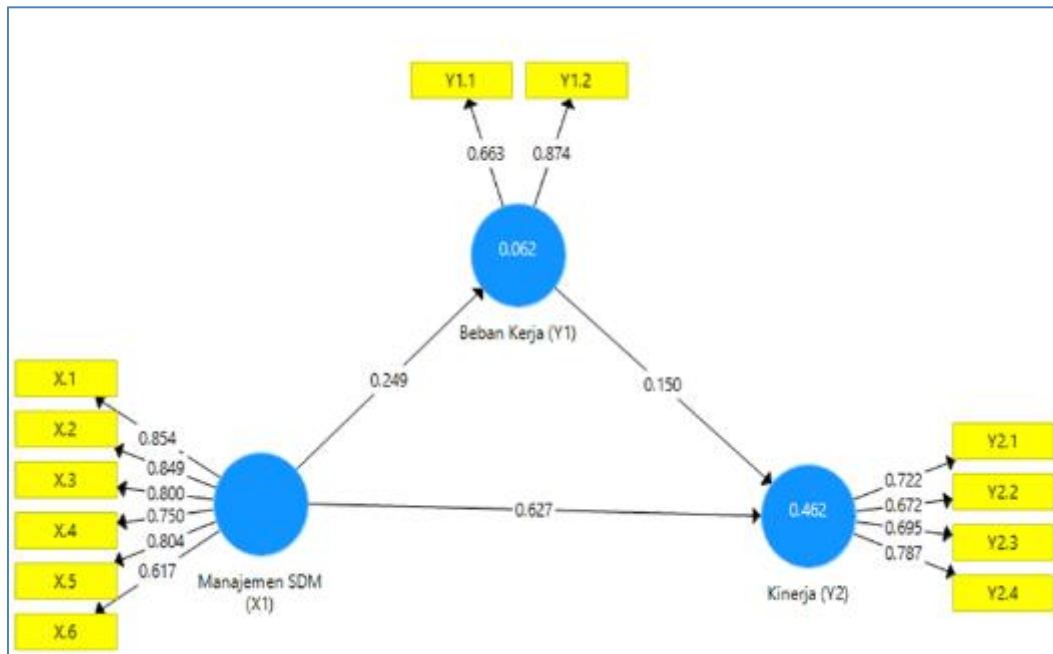
3. Results

3.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 Distribution of Respondent Characteristics in Psychiatric Hospitals of Southeast Sulawesi Province

Characteristic	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
26 – 30	13	14.3
31 – 35	19	20.9
36 – 40	16	17.6
41 – 45	12	13.2
46 – 50	24	26.4
51 – 55	7	7.7
Gender		
Man	45	49.5
Woman	46	50.5
Education		
D3 Nursing	57	D3
S1 Nursing	22	24.2
Ners	12	13.2
Tenure		
1 – 5 Years	27	29.7
Over 5 Years	64	70.3
Marital Status		
Unmarried	3	3.3
Marry	88	96.7
Employment Status		
Honorary	9	9.9
PNS	60	65.9
PPPK	22	24.2

The table above shows that the variation in the characteristics of the respondents is quite diverse. Based on age group, respondents were dominated by 41–45 years old with a total of 24 people (26.4%). Judging from the level of education, the majority of respondents are D3 Nursing graduates, namely 57 people (62.6%). The respondents' marital status showed the dominance of the married group with a total of 88 people (96.7%),. based on employment status, most of the respondents were civil servants, namely 60 people (65.9%).

3.1.1. Outer Model

Figure 1 Outer Model Measurement Results

The results of the model measurement showed that in the HR management variable, the outer loading value of the six indicators, namely planning (0.854), organizing (0.849), driving (0.800), supervision (0.750), motivation (0.804) and evaluation (0.617) was valid to be used in reflecting the measurement of HR management variables. Meanwhile, the outer loading values of the three indicators, namely the physical environment (0.663) and the psychological environment (0.874), are valid to be used in reflecting the measurement of workload variables. The results of the performance variable measurement model show that the outer loading values of the four indicators, namely effectiveness (0.722), responsibility (0.672), discipline (0.695) and initiative (0.787) are valid to be used in reflecting the measurement of workload variables.

### 3.1.2. Predictive Relevance

Table 2 R-Square Test Results

Structural Models	*Endogenous Variable*	(R2)
1	Workload (Y1)	0.062
2	Performance (Y2)	0.462

Based on the determination kefisin value (R2) presented in the table above, the Q2 value can be determined by the following calculation:

$Q2 = 1 - (1 - R12) . (1 - R_{Sec. 22})$
$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0.062) . (1 - 0,462)$
$Q2 = 1 - (0.938) . (0,538)$
$Q2 = 1 - 0.504644$
$Q2 = 0.495356$

Based on the results of the calculation of perception data, it is known that the predictive relevance value of Q2 = 0.495356. This means that the accuracy or accuracy of this research model can explain the diversity of HR management, workload and performance variables of 49.52% and the remaining 50.48% is explained by other variables that are not contained in this research model

3.1.3. Inner Model
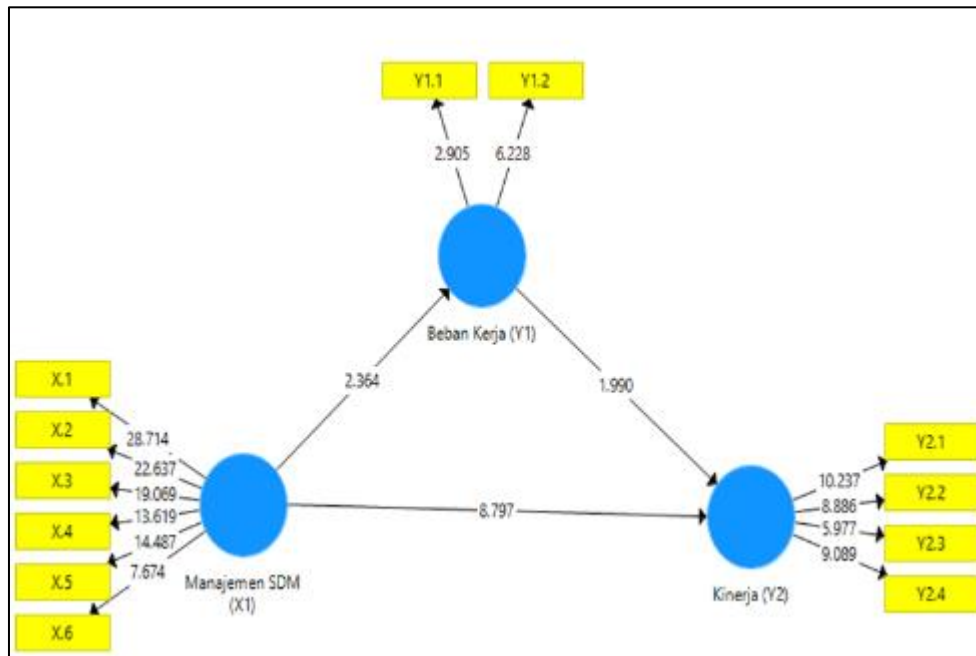
Figure 2 T-statistics diagram

The test results of the above scheme were obtained from 3 (three) direct influences that were tested, all of which had a significant effect, namely (1) HR management had a significant effect on workload, (2) HR management had a significant effect on performance, (3) workload had a significant effect on performance. The full details can be seen in the following table.

Table 3 Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Average (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (| O/STDEV |)	P Values
X1 -> Y1	0.249	0.280	0.105	2.364	0.018
X1 -> Y2	0.627	0.634	0.071	8.797	0.000
Y1 -> Y2	0.150	0.152	0.075	1.990	0.047

H_1 : The Influence of HR Management on Workload

The results of the test of the influence of HR management on workload can be proven by the *estimated* value of the perception data path coefficient of 0.249 with a positive direction. Based on the data above, hypothesis I in this study is the influence of HR management on workload. The results of data processing with *smartPLS* were found that the t-statistical value was 2.346 > 1.96 (t-table) and *the p-value* was 0.018 < 0.05 (significant), thus it can be said that the first hypothesis in this study was accepted so that it can be concluded that human resource management has a positive and significant influence on the workload of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital.

The results of this study show that the better HR management will affect the workload of health workers. In this study, HR management is described as planning, organizing, mobilizing, supervision, motivation and evaluation. This can have implications for optimizing human resource management in inpatient health workers to support the quality of health services in the inpatient room of the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital which is getting better.

H2: The Influence of HR Management on Performance

The results of the test of the influence of HR management on performance can be proven by the *estimated value of the* perception path coefficient of 0.627 with a positive direction. Based on the data in the table above, hypothesis 2 in this study is the influence of HR management on performance. The results of data processing with *smartPLS* are known that

the t-statistical value is 8.797 > 1.96 (t-table) and the p-value is 0.000 < 0.05 (significant), thus it can be said that the second hypothesis in this study is accepted so that it can be concluded that HR management has a positive and significant influence on the performance of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Psychiatric Hospital.

H3: The Effect of Workload on Performance

The results of the test of the effect of workload on performance can be proven by the *estimated* value of the path coefficient of 0.150 with a positive direction. Based on the data in the table above, hypothesis 3 in this study is the effect of workload on performance. The results of data processing with *smartPLS* were found that the t-statistical value was 1.990 > 1.96 (t-table) and the p-value was 0.047 < 0.05 (significant), thus it can be said that the third hypothesis in this study is accepted so that it can be concluded that the workload has a positive and significant influence on the performance of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital.

3.1.4. Indirect Influence Path Coefficient Testing

Table 4 Specific Indirect Effect Test Calculation Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Average (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (| O/STDEV |)	P Values
X1 -> Y1-> Y2	0.037	0.039	0.025	1.490	0.137

Based on the table above, it is known that the value of the indirect path coefficient (Original Sample) of 0.037 indicates a positive influence of HR Management on Performance through Workload. The results of the calculation of the specific indirect effect test on Smart PLS were obtained with a t-statistical result (t-calculus) with a value of 1.490 < from a critical t-of 1.96, while the probability value (p-values) was obtained with a value of 0.137 > alpha 0.05. Based on the results of this analysis, it can be explained that the indirect influence of HR management on performance through workload is insignificant.

4. Discussion

4.1. The Influence of HR Management on Performance

The results of the first hypothesis test in this study show that there is a positive and significant influence between Human Resource (HR) management on the workload of inpatient health workers. Statistical evidence shows a t-statistical value of 2.346 which exceeds the t-table (1.96), and a p-value of 0.018 which is below the significance threshold of 0.05. The positive path coefficient of 0.249 indicates that the better the implementation of HR management, the workload of health workers tends to be positively affected. Overall, these findings confirm that efforts in planning, organizing, mobilizing, supervising, motivating, and evaluating human resources at Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospitals have direct implications for their workload.

HR management is a strategic approach in managing individual skills, motivation, and development in an organization (Hamali, 2018). The main functions of HRM, which include planning, organizing, and supervising, aim to achieve organizational goals efficiently (Mangkunegara, 2018). The quality of the implementation of these HR functions greatly affects various aspects of employees' work, including the level of workload they feel. When the MSDM system is optimally implemented, it is hoped that an ideal balance can be created between the demands of work and the capacity of health workers.

The results of this study show that the relationship between the theory of MSDM and the workload of health workers where the HR management process plays a role in allocating and regulating human resources. For example, through the HR planning function, organizations can predict and adjust the amount of labor required to the actual workload in the inpatient room. Then, the organizing and oversight functions ensure that tasks and responsibilities are distributed evenly and efficiently, thereby reducing the likelihood of excessive workload or, conversely, overly light workload. The implementation of good HR management systematically regulates the work environment so that health workers can work productively without experiencing burnout.

The positive and significant influence of HR management on workload can be explained through the internal mechanisms created by the HR system. In this study, the motivation indicator had the highest score which showed that the Southeast Sulawesi provincial psychiatric hospital in carrying out human resource management had the ability to motivate respondents well. This indicates that respondents feel the rewards given by the leadership and feel proud in providing services to patients at Southeast Sulawesi mental hospitals.

This research is in line with previous studies which show that effective workload management is an integral part of the HR management function to achieve organizational goals (Fatkah & Raharjo, 2025; Sulastri & Onsardi, 2020). These studies implicitly support the conclusion that HR management interventions, such as the provision of a conducive and motivational work environment, have a crucial role in managing and optimizing the workforce.

4.2. The Influence of HR Management on Performance

The results of the data analysis prove that human resource management has a positive and significant influence on the performance of health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital. The second hypothesis test showed that the path coefficient value was 0.627 with a positive direction, confirming that improving the quality of HR management would have an impact on improving performance. Statistically, a very high t-statistical value of 8.797 (>t-table 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05), convincingly support the acceptance of this hypothesis. This conclusion reinforces that the HR policies and practices implemented by organizations have succeeded in becoming a major driving factor in improving the performance of health workers.

The results of the study showing a positive path coefficient of 0.627 are in line with the core concept in HR management theory that good human management practices are the main predictors of organizational success. In research by Hidayat & Astuti (2024) which confirms that the implementation of effective HR management, especially in terms of training and development, is strongly correlated with improved competencies and employee performance. This linkage shows that the HR management practice at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Psychiatric Hospital, which includes planning, motivation, and evaluation, has been successfully translated into positive actions and work outcomes of health workers. Thus, the quality of health service performance in hospitals is highly dependent on optimizing the function of MSDM.

The results of this study are consistent with the results of previous studies that explicitly found a positive relationship between MSDM practices, such as training, leadership, and compensation, and the performance of nurses and other health workers (Apriani et al., 2024; Junaidi et al., 2024). This previous research further strengthens the finding that investment in human resource management, especially in the hospital environment, is an effective and essential strategy to ensure the achievement of excellent and sustainable service performance.

4.3. The Effect of Workload on Performance

The results of the third hypothesis test showed that there was a positive and significant influence between workload on the performance of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Psychiatric Hospital. The empirical evidence is supported by a path coefficient value of 0.150 in a positive direction, which indicates that increasing workload, to a certain extent, can actually improve performance. Statistically, the t-value of 1.990 > t-table (1.96), and the p-value of 0.047 were below the significance threshold of 0.05. These findings conclude that a well-managed workload can function as a motivating challenge and have a positive impact on improving the performance of health workers.

The finding that workload has a positive effect on performance at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Hospital is very consistent with the challenge-stress theory in industrial & organizational psychology, where work demands that are seen as challenges can spur motivation and performance. In a study of health workers in public hospitals in China, challenge stress was significantly associated with increased public service motivation ($\beta = 0.14$; $p < 0.001$) and work performance (job performance; $\beta = 0.13$; $p < 0.001$), while hindrance stress was negatively associated with performance (Deng et al., 2019). Therefore, a well-managed workload allows healthcare workers to view the demands of the task as an opportunity to demonstrate professionalism, increase work engagement, and ultimately, improve the quality of performance.

Research shows that there is a positive influence of workload (coefficient of 0.150) which means that the level of work pressure that exists encourages healthcare workers to use their skills and time more efficiently. The existence of strict targets and deadlines, which are part of the workload, forces individuals to adapt, increase focus, and optimize their work strategies. Challenging workloads prevent monotonous routines and trigger the release of psychological energy

needed to achieve performance goals. Therefore, in a dynamic healthcare environment, a scalable workload serves as a catalyst to unleash the best performance potential of the staff.

The results show that workload is positively related to performance in this study in line with the challenge stress framework—that is, when job demands are perceived as a reasonable and manageable challenge, it can spur motivation and improve workforce performance. Research shows that challenging stressors can be positively related to job satisfaction and performance when supported by an adequate organizational context (Irianti et al., 2023). Other research also reported a positive relationship between proportional workload and work output, indicating that a challenging rather than excessive workload can be interpreted as an opportunity to demonstrate competence and professionalism thereby encouraging improvement in individual and organizational performance (Mulya & Yuliantini, 2023).

4.4. The Influence of HR Management in Handling Workload and Its Influence on Health Worker Performance

The results show that the value of the indirect path coefficient indicates the direction of a positive influence between human resource (HR) management on performance through workload. Statistically, the indirect influence of HR management on performance through workload is not significant, although it has a positive relationship direction. This is because workload has not played a strong role as a mediator in the relationship between HR management and the performance of health workers in the inpatient room. This can happen because healthcare workers are still able to maintain performance despite facing a high workload, thanks to other factors such as professional commitment, peer support, organizational culture, and intrinsic motivation. In other words, good HR management practices do not necessarily directly affect performance through workload reduction mechanisms, but can affect performance through other psychosocial pathways.

This finding can be explained through the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model theory, which states that job demands do not necessarily reduce performance if individuals have adequate job resources, such as leadership support, training, and a supportive work environment. This theory explains that the balance between the demands of work and available resources determines whether or not the workload will negatively impact performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

The results of this study are in line with the findings Scarlet Witch (2013) which states that workload does not always mediate the relationship between management practices and performance, because there are other factors such as job engagement and organizational support that are more dominant in influencing employee performance. In line with research Şanliöz et al. (2023) What mentions that the variable that plays a mediator role in the relationship is perceived organizational support, while the direct relationship between work engagement and job performance is not dominant. This shows that organizational support is the main mechanism that bridges the influence of work attachment on performance.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study can be concluded that human resource management has a positive and significant effect on the workload of inpatient health workers at Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospitals. The better the human resource management of the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital, the better it is in accommodating the workload of inpatient health workers, the human resource management has a positive and significant effect on the performance of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital. The better the human resource management of the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Psychiatric Hospital, the better the improvement of the performance of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Psychiatric Hospital, the workload has a positive and significant effect on the performance of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital. The more measurable the workload, the better the performance of inpatient health workers at the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital and the influence of HR Management on Performance through Workload is not significant.

The Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital is advised to strengthen the health worker needs planning system, especially in the distribution of workload in inpatient rooms. Hospitals need to conduct periodic evaluations of the number of personnel, shift assignments, and performance monitoring mechanisms so that there is no inequality in the distribution of tasks. In addition, The Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Mental Hospital needs to improve competency development programs, training, and the provision of structured motivation and rewards because motivation indicators are proven to have a high contribution in improving performance. Improvement of the supervision and evaluation system also needs to be carried out consistently to ensure that the workload is well managed and the performance of health workers remains optimal.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

There was no conflict of interest in this study.

Statement of ethical approval

This research was carried out in accordance with ethical principles and has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Psychiatric Hospital. All participants gave consent after a voluntary explanation, and their confidentiality and anonymity were strictly

Statement of informed consent

Maintained throughout the research process. This research does not have any financial conflicts of interest or any external influence in the implementation and reporting of research results.

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