



**THE EFFECT OF WORKLOAD AND LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE
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Abstract

Economic dynamics in the real estate sector require companies to maintain operational efficiency through effective human resource management. This study aims to analyze the effect of workload and leadership on employee performance in a real estate company in Sidoarjo. This research employed a quantitative approach with a saturated sampling technique, in which all 45 employees who met the research criteria were selected as respondents. Primary data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS). The results indicate that workload has a negative but statistically insignificant effect on employee performance. In contrast, leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Based on these findings, companies are expected to strengthen operational communication, provide systematic work instructions, and manage workload appropriately in order to maintain optimal employee productivity.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Leadership, PLS-SEM, Workload



INTRODUCTION

The property sector is one of the key sectors contributing to the national economy due to its linkages with employment absorption, financing, and construction activities. However, current global and domestic economic dynamics are characterized by high levels of uncertainty, which directly affect people's ability to purchase property in the real estate sector. National data from GoodStats (2025) recorded that house sales in Indonesia declined by 3.8% in the second quarter of 2025. This decline in purchasing power was also confirmed by Bank Indonesia's Residential Property Price Survey (SHPR) throughout 2025, which reported a contraction in the national primary market of 3.80% year-on-year in the second quarter, followed by a further contraction of 1.29% in the third quarter. From a macro-theoretical perspective, public purchasing power is a key determinant that influences the stability of growth in the property sector.

The phenomenon of the sluggish national property market has significant implications for the decline in the stability of the Company's financial performance and operational performance. As a developer that has been established for 45 years, the Company is currently facing losses in the form of holding costs and opportunity costs due to its inability to achieve annual sales targets.

Internal data from a real estate company in Sidoarjo indicate that sales performance from 2021 to 2024 remained far below the established sales targets. In 2021, the company set a target of 160 units; however, actual sales reached only 125 units, equivalent to 59.72% of the target. In 2022, the target remained at 160 units, but actual sales declined to 59 units, representing 36.21% of the target. A similar condition occurred in 2023, when the target increased to 188 units, while actual sales remained at 59 units, equivalent to 32.76% of the target. In 2024, the company set a target of 120 units; however, actual sales reached only 39 units, representing 38.65% of the target.

Based on a preliminary study conducted through a pre-survey involving 15 employee respondents from a real estate company in Sidoarjo, strong indications were found of multidimensional problems related to the workload variable. All respondents (100%) confirmed the existence of multiple job responsibilities due to limited personnel. As a result, 53% of employees reported a high daily workload, 60% stated that their physical and mental energy was severely drained, and 60% indicated that regular working hours were insufficient to complete their responsibilities. This high level of time pressure triggered psychological fatigue among employees, as reflected in the occurrence of rework



at 67%, a decline in work quality at 53%, and delays in completing projects or reports at 47%.

In addition to workload, leadership effectiveness within the company was identified as a crucial operational constraint. The results of in-depth interviews with six key informants across divisions revealed barriers to vertical coordination and a pattern of one-way communication. Informants from the QC and QS divisions confirmed the emergence of a *laissez-faire* tendency, in which leaders were slow to make final decisions or validate project materials, yet released their authority spontaneously when pressured by deadlines. A rigid and centralized leadership structure, without flexible delegation of authority, was also reported by the Estate Administration division, as it hindered the speed of response in handling emergency complaints from residential customers. Furthermore, inconsistencies in work instructions in the field led to inefficient use of energy among landscape and mechanical-electrical staff, particularly due to instructions to dismantle and reinstall billboards from the beginning. On the other hand, performance evaluation policies set by leaders were considered unrealistic by the Sales Marketing division, as aggressive contract termination policies were applied to new sales staff within three months without considering the sales cycle of the property industry.

Although, theoretically and empirically, workload and leadership play essential roles in shaping work performance, inconsistent research gaps remain evident. Regarding the workload variable, Susilawati et al. (2025) demonstrated a significant negative effect of workload on performance. However, this finding was contradicted by Polakitang et al. (2019), who found that workload did not have a significant effect on staff performance. In terms of leadership, Priyanti et al. (2025) confirmed a significant positive effect of leadership on improving work productivity. Conversely, Nugroho et al. (2024) found inconsistent results, showing that leadership had no significant effect on employee performance. Based on these inconsistencies in previous findings and the urgency of real problems in the field, this study aims to examine and analyze how workload and leadership affect employee performance in a real estate company in Sidoarjo. The findings of this study are expected to help the company manage workload more effectively and strengthen the role of leadership in order to continuously improve employee performance.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on workload and leadership is closely related to the Job Demands-Resources theory proposed by Demerouti and Bakker (2001). This theory explains that every work environment has specific risk factors that are divided into two main categories: job demands and job resources. When job demands are excessive and are not balanced by adequate job resources, employees' energy may be depleted, leading to work fatigue and a decline in performance. Conversely, when social support, role clarity, and leadership are present in an ideal proportion, they can reduce the impact of job demands and stimulate employees' work motivation.

Workload is defined as the accumulation of tasks or responsibilities assigned by an organization to be completed by employees within a specific period of time. Mahawati et al. (2021) define workload as the amount of physical and mental work imposed on employees. In line with this, Nurhandayani (2022) explains that workload is related to conditions that arise due to limitations in employees' ability to complete work tasks. According to Putri et al. (2023), workload does not only consist of the number of tasks assigned to employees, but also includes job complexity, attached responsibilities, and time pressure during the completion process. According to Koesomowidjojo (2017), the intensity level of workload can be evaluated through three main indicators, namely targets to be achieved, which refer to the volume and quantity of tasks; work conditions, which reflect the characteristics and complexity of daily tasks; and the use of working time, which concerns the effectiveness of working-hour utilization and indications of overtime. Disproportionate workload management can lead to emotional and physical fatigue, which ultimately results in a decline in the accuracy of work outcomes.

Leadership is a process of directing, influencing, and mobilizing the behavior of individuals or groups within an organization in order to achieve shared goals productively. Northouse (2021) explains that leadership is a process through which an individual influences a group of people to achieve a common goal. In line with this, Sinaga (2023) emphasizes that leadership is not only related to formal position, but also includes a leader's ability to guide, motivate, and build communication that supports employee performance. The presence of an effective leader is reflected in the ability to organize work, provide work direction, pay attention to subordinates' conditions, and create open communication and work support. Adapting the concept of Robbins and Judge (2017), leadership effectiveness is measured through four dimensions, namely



work organization, which refers to task distribution; work direction, which refers to the provision of standard instructions; concern for subordinates, which reflects attention to staff conditions; and communication and support, which involve providing motivation and opportunities for feedback.

Employee performance can be understood as the work achievement produced by an individual in carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities, by considering ability, quality of work outcomes, and professional attitude at work. Afandi (2021) explains that performance refers to an employee's work achievement, which is reflected through their contribution to the organization. To measure the level of success in staff work performance, this study adopts the criteria proposed by Mangkunegara (2017), which include three indicators: work quantity, referring to the achievement of units or targets; work quality, referring to accuracy, neatness, and output precision; and timeliness, referring to the ability to complete responsibilities within the scheduled deadlines.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed an associative quantitative method. The target population consisted of all 45 employees working at a real estate company in Sidoarjo during the research period. All employees in the target population were surveyed using a non-probability sampling method with a census approach. Primary data were obtained from questionnaires completed by the respondents and measured using a five-point Likert scale, while secondary data were obtained from company records. The collected data were then processed and analyzed using PLS-SEM.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 illustrates the PLS output described above. The loading factor values for each indicator are displayed on the arrows connecting the constructs and their indicators. Since all loading factor values exceed the minimum threshold of 0.50, the validity criteria are considered to have been fulfilled.

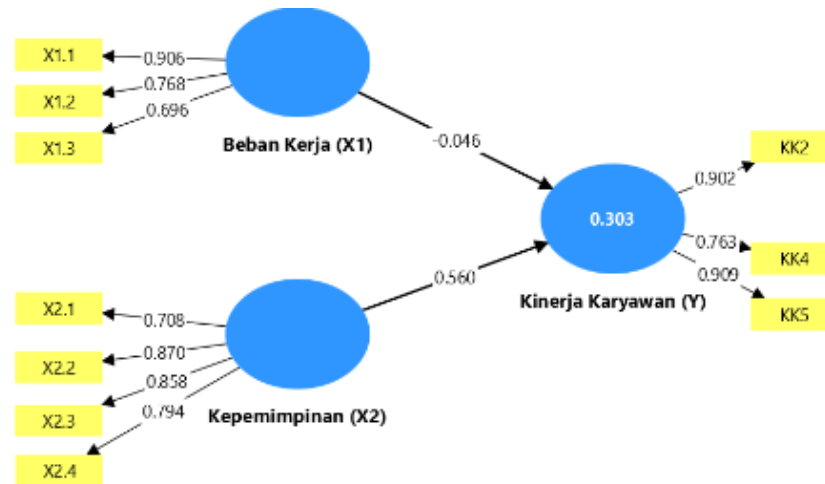


Figure 1.
Outer Model with Factor Loading, Path Coefficients, and R-Square
Source: Data Processed (2026)

Table 1.
Outer Loadings Test Results (Mean, STDEV, and T-Values)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STVDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
X1.1 <- Workload	0.906	0.7	0.314	2.889	0.004
X1.2 <- Workload	0.768	0.673	0.319	2.407	0.016
X1.3 <- Workload	0.696	0.643	0.305	2.279	0.023
X2.1 <- Leadership	0.708	0.691	0.117	6.074	0.00
X2.2 <- Leadership	0.870	0.868	0.041	21.332	0.00
X2.3 <- Leadership	0.858	0.855	0.057	14.958	0.00
X2.4 <- Leadership	0.794	0.786	0.078	10.16	0.00
Y1 <- Employee Performance	0.902	0.898	0.034	26.583	0.00
Y2 <- Employee Performance	0.763	0.76	0.092	8.318	0.00
Y3 <- Employee Performance	0.909	0.909	0.032	28.331	0.00

Source: Data Processed (2026)



Table 1 shows that most reflective indicators of the workload, leadership, and employee performance variables have loading factor values greater than 0.50 and are statistically significant, as indicated by T-statistics greater than 1.96 or P-values less than 0.05. This means that most indicators meet the requirements for convergent validity.

Table 2.
Discriminant Validity Test Results Based on Cross-Loading Values

	Workload (X1)	Leadership (X2)	Employee Performance (Y)
X1.1	0.906	0.127	0.102
X1.2	0.768	0.282	0.060
X1.3	0.696	0.302	0.036
X2.1	0.188	0.708	0.276
X2.2	0.254	0.870	0.475
X2.3	0.361	0.858	0.549
X2.4	-0.051	0.794	0.408
Y1	-0.017	0.547	0.902
Y2	0.105	0.29	0.763
Y3	0.178	0.513	0.909

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The cross-loading test results show that the indicators of workload (X1), leadership (X2), and employee performance (Y) have higher loading values on their respective constructs than their correlations with other constructs. Therefore, the indicators in this research model can be declared to have met the requirements for discriminant validity.

Table 3.
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
(X1) Workload	0.632
(X2) Leadership	0.656
(Y) Employee Performance	0.741



Source: Data Processed (2026)

Based on Table 3, the workload construct (X1) has an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of 0.632, the leadership construct (X2) has an AVE value of 0.656, and the employee performance construct (Y) has an AVE value of 0.741. Each construct indicator meets the criteria for convergent validity because the values exceed the minimum threshold of 0.50.

Table 4.
Composite Reliability

	Composite Reliability (rho_a)
(X1) Workload	0.905
(X2) Leadership	0.865
(Y) Employee Performance	0.893

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The reliability of a construct is measured using its composite reliability value. A composite reliability value of 0.70 or higher indicates that the construct is reliable, meaning that its indicators consistently measure the latent variable. Since the three variables show composite reliability values of 0.70 or higher, all variables in this study are considered reliable.

Table 5.
Latent Variable Correlation

	Workload (X1)	Leadership (X2)	Employee Performance (Y)
Workload (X1)	1	0.249	0.094
Leadership (X2)	0.249	1	0.548
Employee Performance (Y)	0.094	0.548	1

Source: Data Processed (2026)

Based on the latent variable correlation table above, the strongest linear relationship is found between leadership (X2) and employee performance (Y), with a correlation value of 0.548. This value indicates a moderately strong positive correlation between leadership and employee performance. In other words, the



better the leadership, the greater the likelihood that employee performance will improve. Meanwhile, the relationship between workload (X1) and leadership (X2) has a correlation value of 0.249. This value indicates a positive but relatively low correlation, meaning that although there is a relationship between workload and leadership, the relationship is not particularly strong. Overall, it can be concluded that leadership is the variable most strongly correlated with employee performance, whereas the correlation between workload and employee performance is very weak. These results support the research findings that leadership is a more dominant factor in explaining employee performance.

Table 6.
R-Square

	R Square
Employee Performance	0.303

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The R^2 value of 0.303 indicates that the model is able to explain 30.3% of the variation in employee performance as influenced by workload and leadership. The remaining 69.7% is explained by other variables that are not included within the scope of this study.

Table 7.
Path Coefficients (Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Values)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STVDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Workload -> Employee Performance	-0.046	-0.028	0.184	0.249	0.804
Leadership -> Employee Performance	0.56	0.567	0.102	5.488	0.00

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The data processing results of the structural model show that the relationship between workload and employee performance is not statistically significant. With a T-statistic value of 0.249, which is lower than 1.96, the first hypothesis is rejected. In contrast, leadership is proven to have an effect on



employee performance, as indicated by a T-statistic value of 5.488, which is greater than 1.96. Therefore, the second hypothesis is accepted.

The Effect of Workload on Employee Performance

The results of this study indicate that although workload has a negative relationship with employee performance in a real estate company in Sidoarjo, its effect is not statistically significant. This finding suggests that the existing workload can still be managed by employees and therefore does not have a substantial impact on the decline in performance. The indicator with the highest contribution is “targets to be achieved” ($X1.1 = 0.906$), which emphasizes the importance of establishing clear and measurable performance standards as work guidelines, objective evaluation tools, and references for the company’s long-term strategy. This finding is consistent with previous studies by Putri (2023) and Uma and Swasti (2024), which concluded that workload does not have a significant effect on employee performance.

The Effect of Leadership on Employee Performance

The findings reveal that leadership has a positive and significant relationship with employee performance in a real estate company in Sidoarjo. This indicates that an effective and supportive leadership style serves as a key driver in improving employee productivity. The indicator with the highest contribution is “the ability to provide clear direction and instructions” ($X2.2 = 0.870$), which confirms that unambiguous direction is crucial for keeping operations structured in accordance with the company’s vision and mission, minimizing errors, and optimizing resource allocation. This finding is consistent with previous studies by Lestari and Lestari (2023) and Prasetyani (2023), which confirmed that leadership has a positive and significant effect on improving employee performance.

Synthesis of Key Findings

In general, the results of this study indicate that the improvement of employee performance is more strongly explained by the quality of leadership than by workload. Workload shows a negative relationship with employee performance, but the relationship is not strong enough to significantly reduce performance. Meanwhile, leadership that provides clear direction, structured operational communication, and adequate work support serves as an internal policy foundation that should be maintained by the real estate company in Sidoarjo.



CONCLUSION

The results of hypothesis testing and the discussion indicate that workload has a negative relationship with employee performance in a real estate company in Sidoarjo. This finding suggests that the current workload remains within a relatively tolerable range and can still be managed by employees; therefore, it has not become a major factor that significantly reduces performance. Although excessive workload may theoretically lead to fatigue, work pressure, and a decline in the quality of work outcomes, in the context of the real estate company in Sidoarjo, these factors are not strong enough to have a significant effect on employee performance.

On the other hand, leadership has been proven to have a positive and significant effect on employee performance in the real estate company in Sidoarjo. This confirms that leadership is an important element in improving employee performance, as better leadership contributes to higher employee performance. Effective and supportive leadership, the ability to provide clear instructions, appropriate supervision, and good communication with subordinates have been proven to be key factors that encourage employees to work more disciplinedly, responsibly, and productively, as well as to contribute more actively to the achievement of company goals.

To maintain and improve these achievements, the company is advised to keep workload levels proportional and strengthen leadership practices by providing clear and unambiguous work instructions in order to minimize technical errors in the field.

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