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MENTAL HEALTH AND WORK ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract

High administrative demands and sustained performance targets placed civil servants under continuous work pressure, making mental health and the work environment critical factors in maintaining employee performance. This study aimed to analyze the effects of mental health and work environment on employee performance at the Deputy for Small Enterprises, Ministry of MSMEs. A quantitative survey method was employed by distributing questionnaires to 87 civil servants selected through stratified random sampling. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression supported by validity, reliability, and classical assumption tests. The results show that mental health and work environment have positive and significant effects on employee performance, both partially and simultaneously. The coefficient of determination of 0.688 indicates that 68.8 percent of the variation in employee performance is explained by these two variables. These findings confirm that employee performance in the public sector is strongly influenced by mental health and a supportive work environment.

Keywords: *Civil Servants, Employee Performance, Mental Health, Work Environment*

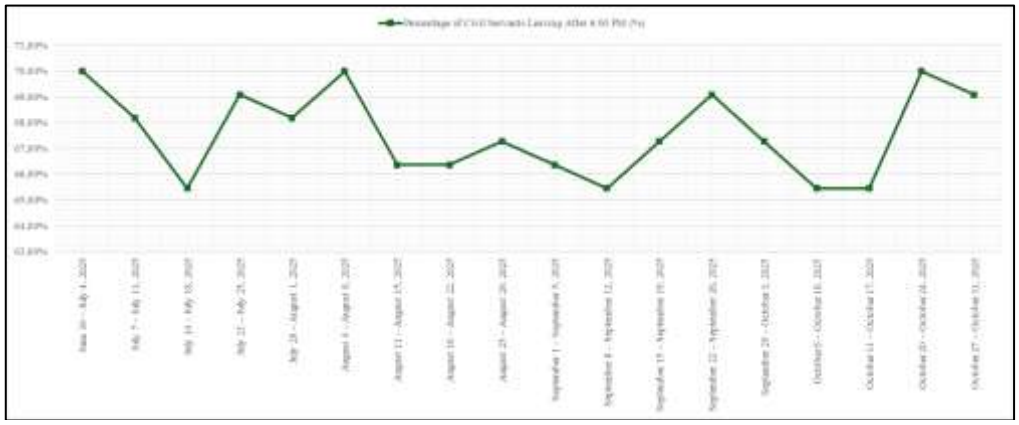
1. BACKGROUND

In public sector organizations facing sustained administrative demands and performance targets, the performance of civil servants is determined not only by technical competencies but also by employees' psychological conditions and the quality of a supportive work environment. The reciprocal relationship between organizations and employees constitutes a critical factor, whereby organizational support, fairness, and concern are likely to be reciprocated through higher levels of employee commitment, loyalty, and performance, as explained by Social Exchange Theory (Ahmad et al., 2023; Blau, 1964). As productivity demands continue to intensify, organizations are increasingly required to balance performance achievement with efforts to maintain employees' mental health. From the perspective of Conservation of Resources Theory, individuals strive to preserve psychological resources such as energy, emotional stability, and mental well-being in order to function effectively at work (Hobfoll, 1989; Sha & Chang, 2025). When work demands increase without adequate support from the work environment, the risk of stress and work-related exhaustion tends to escalate, potentially leading to a sustained decline in employee performance.

The role of mental health and the work environment in shaping employee performance can be comprehensively explained through the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework, which emphasizes that employee performance and well-being are influenced by the balance between job demands and the availability of supportive resources (Bakker et al., 2023; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). When high job demands are not accompanied by adequate resources at both the individual and organizational levels, employees become more vulnerable to prolonged stress and work-related exhaustion, which in turn adversely affects performance (Lesener et al., 2019; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2013). This condition is particularly relevant in public sector organizations, where civil

servants are confronted with substantial administrative workloads, clearly defined performance targets, and strong accountability demands in the execution of their duties (Robbins & Judge, 2024; Sedarmayanti, 2019).

Work pressure as described within the JD-R framework is also reflected in the work practices of civil servants at the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), particularly within the Deputy for Small Enterprises. Sustained administrative demands and performance target attainment require employees to complete tasks within limited timeframes and under relatively high workloads. This condition is reflected in employee departure patterns that frequently extend beyond normal working hours during the July–October 2025 period, as illustrated in Figure 1. These patterns provide empirical evidence of the actual workload intensity and work-related pressure experienced by civil servants in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.



Source: Ministry of MSMEs, 2025

Figure 1. Civil Servants' Departure Patterns at the Deputy for Small Enterprises, 2025

Although numerous studies have examined mental health, work environment, and employee performance, much of the existing literature remains focused on the private sector or addresses these factors separately. Research that simultaneously integrates mental health and work environment in explaining civil servant performance, particularly within strategic units of government ministries, remains relatively limited. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the effects of mental health and work environment on employee performance at the Deputy for Small Enterprises, Ministry of MSMEs. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the enrichment of public sector human resource management literature by extending the application of the JD-R framework in understanding the role of mental health and work environment as key determinants of civil servant performance. From a practical perspective, the findings are expected to provide evidence-based support for the formulation of human resource management policies at the Ministry of MSMEs, particularly in strengthening workplace support and managing workloads to maintain employees' mental health and enhance performance in a sustainable manner.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

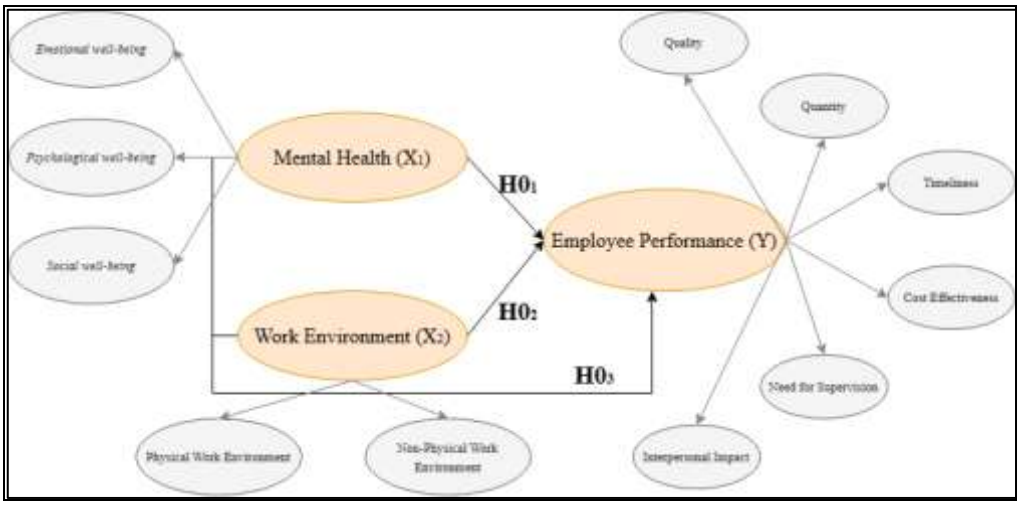
Employee performance represents a fundamental indicator of organizational effectiveness, as it reflects the extent to which human resources are able to transform their capabilities and potential into work outcomes that generate value for the organization (Ayuni et al., 2023; Bernardin & Russell, 2013). From a human resource management

perspective, performance is not interpreted solely as the attainment of work outputs, but also as a reflection of how effectively individuals contribute to organizational continuity and the achievement of strategic objectives (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021; Bernardin & Russell, 2013). Viewed through the lens of Human Capital Theory, the quality of employee performance is closely associated with organizational investment in human resource development, including competency enhancement, accumulation of work experience, and the strengthening of individual capacities (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Becker, 1964; Leontes & Hoole, 2024; Marginson, 2019). In the public sector, civil servant performance is inherently more complex than in private organizations, as its assessment is based not only on efficiency or productivity, but also on the quality of task execution, timeliness, accountability, and contributions to the achievement of organizational goals and the delivery of public services. Therefore, identifying and understanding the factors that shape civil servant performance is essential as a foundation for designing effective and sustainable human resource management policies.

Mental health in the work context refers to an individual's psychological condition that enables employees to cope effectively with job demands while maintaining productive contributions to the organization (Hariyanto et al., 2024; Junengsih et al., 2024). Mental health is not merely understood as the absence of psychological disorders, but encompasses a broader state of well-being that allows individuals to regulate emotions, engage in adaptive thinking, and sustain healthy social interactions within the workplace (Keyes, 2002). Through the Mental Health Continuum framework, Keyes (2002) conceptualizes mental health as a multidimensional construct existing along a spectrum that includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Employees with higher levels of mental health tend to demonstrate emotional stability, derive meaning from their work, and maintain effective social functioning, all of which support sustained performance quality. In contrast, diminished mental health is often manifested through emotional exhaustion, reduced work engagement, and declining effectiveness in task execution, which ultimately undermines employee performance (Keyes, 2002; Lesener et al., 2019; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2013). Accordingly, mental health is positioned as a crucial individual-level factor in explaining variations in employee performance, particularly within public sector organizations characterized by high job demands.

The work environment constitutes an important organizational factor in shaping employees' daily work experiences and influencing both their psychological conditions and performance outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Junengsih et al., 2022; Sedarmayanti, 2019; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). The work environment encompasses not only physical aspects such as workplace facilities, spatial layout, lighting, and levels of comfort, but also non-physical aspects, including interpersonal relationships, communication processes, supervisory support, and the overall organizational climate (Sedarmayanti, 2019). Sedarmayanti (2019) categorizes the work environment into two primary dimensions, namely physical and non-physical work environments, which interact in shaping employee comfort and work effectiveness. A supportive work environment provides adequate resources for employees to perform their tasks efficiently, helps alleviate work pressure, and facilitates alignment between job demands and individual capacity. Conversely, an unfavorable work environment may generate work-related stress, weaken motivation, and adversely affect performance quality (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Accordingly, the work environment is understood not only as a direct determinant of employee performance, but also as an organizational condition that supports mental health and the sustainability of performance over time.

The relationship between mental health, work environment, and employee performance can be comprehensively explained through the JD-R Model, which posits that individual performance emerges from the interaction between job demands and the availability of relevant resources (Bakker et al., 2023; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Within this framework, mental health functions as a personal resource that shapes employees' capacity to manage job demands, while the work environment serves as an organizational resource that can either strengthen or constrain this capacity (Bakker et al., 2023; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Employees with good mental health tend to exhibit higher psychological energy, stronger work engagement, and better work focus, enabling them to utilize environmental support more effectively to achieve higher levels of performance. In contrast, when mental health deteriorates and the work environment fails to provide adequate support, job demands are more likely to generate prolonged stress, exhaustion, and a decline in performance quality. In public sector organizations characterized by extensive regulatory requirements and high accountability pressures, maintaining a balance between individual psychological resources and organizational work conditions becomes crucial for sustaining civil servant performance. Accordingly, this study conceptualizes mental health and the work environment as complementary factors that simultaneously influence employee performance, as reflected in the research model presented in Figure 2.



Source: Developed based on Bakker and Demerouti (2017), Keyes (2002), Sedarmayanti (2019), and Bernardin and Russell (2013)

Figure 2. Research Model

Based on the theoretical foundations discussed above, particularly within the JD-R framework, employee performance is understood as the result of interactions between personal resources and organizational resources. In this regard, mental health is positioned as an individual resource that influences employees' capacity to cope with job demands, while the work environment functions as an organizational resource that supports or constrains performance attainment. The research model presented in Figure 2 therefore serves as the basis for the formulation of the research hypotheses.

$H0_1$: Mental health has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
$H0_2$: Work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
$H0_3$: Mental health and work environment simultaneously have a significant effect on employee performance.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study was designed using a quantitative approach aimed at examining the relationships and causal effects among variables in a measurable and objective manner. The quantitative approach was selected because it aligns with the causal-associative nature of the research objectives, namely to assess the effects of mental health and work environment on employee performance at the Deputy for Small Enterprises, Ministry of MSMEs (Sugiyono, 2013). Through this approach, numerical data serve as the basis for analysis, allowing the relationships among variables to be empirically tested and statistically interpreted. This study is grounded in the positivist paradigm, which assumes that social reality can be objectively measured through observable variables and standardized measurement instruments. This paradigm enables systematic testing of relationships among variables while minimizing researcher bias (Sugiyono, 2013; Waruwu et al., 2025). From a theoretical standpoint, the study adopts a deductive approach, in which hypotheses are formulated based on theories discussed in the literature review and subsequently tested using empirical data (Sugiyono, 2013). In terms of time horizon, this study employs a cross-sectional design, whereby data are collected at a single point in time to capture respondents' conditions during the research period. Accordingly, the analysis focuses on examining the effects of the studied variables at a specific time point (Adiputra et al., 2021).

The population of this study comprised all civil servants assigned to the Deputy for Small Enterprises, Ministry of MSMEs, totaling 108 employees. Given that the study population was distributed across several work units with differing functional characteristics and workload profiles, stratified random sampling was employed as the sampling technique. This approach was selected to ensure proportional representation of each work unit in the research sample while accommodating population heterogeneity (Neuman, 2014; Wu & Thompson, 2020). The minimum sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a margin of error of five percent (Sugiyono, 2013), resulting in a minimum required sample of 85 respondents. As this figure represents the minimum threshold, the application of stratified random sampling with proportional allocation involved rounding up the proportional allocation results, yielding a final sample size of 87 respondents. All respondents were included in the analysis. Details of the sample allocation across strata are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample Allocation by Work Unit

Work Unit	Number of Civil Servants (Population)	$n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$	Sample Size
Deputy Secretariat	36	$n_1 = \frac{36}{108} \times 85$	29
Assistant Deputy for Financing and Investment of Small Enterprises	19	$n_2 = \frac{19}{108} \times 85$	15
Assistant Deputy for Capacity Development of Small Enterprises	19	$n_3 = \frac{19}{108} \times 85$	15
Assistant Deputy for Production and Digitalization of Small Enterprises	17	$n_4 = \frac{17}{108} \times 85$	14

Work Unit	Number of Civil Servants (Population)	$n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$	Sample Size
Assistant Deputy for Partnerships and Supply Chain of Small Enterprises	17	$n_5 = \frac{17}{108} \times 85$	14

Source: Data Processing, 2025

The research instrument employed in this study was a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, which was developed based on the indicators and dimensions of each variable as formulated in the literature review. The mental health variable was operationalized using the dimensions of emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being, adapted from the Mental Health Continuum framework proposed by Keyes (2002). The work environment variable was measured through physical and non-physical dimensions, including working conditions, social support, communication, and workplace comfort, referring to the concept of work environment articulated by Sedarmayanti (2019). Meanwhile, employee performance was measured based on the dimensions of work quality, work quantity, timeliness, cost effectiveness, need for supervision, and interpersonal impact, as formulated by Bernardin and Russell (2013). Overall, the research questionnaire consisted of 40 statement items presented in the form of closed-ended questions to obtain standardized responses. Details of the dimensions and indicators for each variable are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Operationalization of Research Variables

Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Reference
Mental Health	Emotional Well-being	Positive affect	(Keyes, 2002)
		Low negative affect	
		Life satisfaction	
	Psychological Well-being	Self-acceptance	
		Positive relationships	
		Personal growth	
		Purpose in life	
		Environmental mastery	
		Autonomy	
	Social Well-being	Social integration	
		Social contribution	
		Social acceptance	
		Social coherence	
Work Environment	Physical Work Environment	Lighting	(Sedarmayanti, 2019)
		Ventilation and air circulation	
		Workspace layout	
		Decoration and color arrangement	
		Noise level	
		Availability of work facilities	
	Non-Physical Work Environment	Supervisor–subordinate relationships	
		Coworker relationships	
		Supportive work climate	

Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Reference
Employee Performance	Quality	Accuracy and completeness of work outcomes	(Bernardin & Russell, 2013)
		Low error rate	
		Compliance with standard operating procedures	
	Quantity	Number of outputs or work units produced	
		Productivity level within a given period	
	Timeliness	Proportion of tasks completed on time	
		Ability to manage time and work priorities	
	Accountability and budget effectiveness	Alignment with work plans	
		Contribution to program targets	
	Need for supervision	Level of autonomy at work	
		Ability to complete tasks without supervisor intervention	
	Interpersonal impact	Ability to cooperate and assist coworkers	
		Ability to maintain effective communication and a conducive work atmosphere	

Source: Adapted from Keyes (2002), Sedarmayanti (2019), and Bernardin and Russell (2013)

The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to examine the effects of mental health and work environment on employee performance. Prior to conducting the regression analysis, the research instrument was subjected to validity and reliability testing. Item validity was assessed using correlation analysis, while reliability was evaluated using *Cronbach's Alpha*. An item was considered valid if the calculated correlation coefficient exceeded the critical *r-value* or if the *p-value* was less than 0.05, whereas the instrument was deemed reliable if the *Cronbach's Alpha* value was equal to or greater than 0.70 (Ghozali, 2018; Sugiyono, 2013). Subsequently, the regression model was examined through a series of classical assumption tests, including tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroskedasticity. The normality test was conducted to ensure that the regression residuals were normally distributed, with a *p-value* greater than 0.05 indicating normality (Gujarati & Porter, 2008). Multicollinearity was assessed using *Tolerance* and *Variance Inflation Factor* (VIF) values, where the model was considered free from multicollinearity if the *Tolerance* value exceeded 0.10 and the VIF value was below 10 (Gujarati & Porter, 2008). Heteroskedasticity was tested using the Glejser method, with a *p-value* greater than 0.05 indicating the absence of heteroskedasticity (Gujarati & Porter, 2008; Junengsih et al., 2022). Hypothesis testing was performed using the *t-test* to examine the partial effects of each independent variable and the *F-test* to assess the simultaneous effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable, with a significance level (α) set at 0.05 (Gujarati & Porter, 2008; Sugiyono, 2013). In addition,

the coefficient of determination (R^2) was employed to evaluate the extent to which mental health and work environment explain variations in employee performance.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data in this study were collected using a questionnaire designed to measure mental health, work environment, and employee performance. The research instrument consisted of 40 statement items, comprising 15 items for the mental health variable (X_1), 12 items for the work environment variable (X_2), and 13 items for the employee performance variable (Y). To ensure that the instrument accurately represented the constructs under investigation and produced reliable measurements, an instrument quality assessment was conducted prior to further statistical analysis. This evaluation focused on testing the validity and reliability of the measurement items.

Based on the validity test results presented in Table 3, all statement items for the mental health, work environment, and employee performance variables met the established validity criteria. The correlation coefficients for each item demonstrated a statistically significant association with the total score of their respective variables, indicating that all items were appropriate for inclusion in subsequent analyses.

Table 3. Results of the Validity Test

Variable	Total Items	*Range of r (calculated)*	*r (table)*	Description
Mental Health (X_1)	15	0.384 – 0.839	0.2108	All items are valid
Work Environment (X_2)	12	0.408 – 0.807	0.2108	All items are valid
Employee Performance (Y)	13	0.364 – 0.841	0.2108	All items are valid

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Reliability testing was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement instrument using *Cronbach's Alpha* coefficients. Based on the results presented in Table 4, all research variables achieved *Cronbach's Alpha* values that met the established reliability criteria. These findings indicate that the statement items exhibit satisfactory internal consistency, confirming that the research instrument is reliable and appropriate for subsequent statistical analysis.

Table 4. Results of the Reliability Test

Variable	Total Items	*Cronbach's Alpha*	Description
Mental Health (X_1)	15	0.916	Reliable
Work Environment (X_2)	12	0.883	Reliable
Employee Performance (Y)	13	0.919	Reliable

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Classical Assumption Tests

Prior to hypothesis testing, the multiple linear regression model was first examined through a series of classical assumption tests to ensure that the model satisfied the requirements of regression analysis (Gujarati & Porter, 2008). These tests were conducted to verify the adequacy of the model so that the estimated results could be interpreted accurately. The classical assumption tests included residual normality testing,

multicollinearity testing among the independent variables, and heteroskedasticity testing. A summary of the classical assumption test results is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of the Classical Assumption Tests

Test Type	Method	Criteria	Results	Description
Normality	Kolmogorov–Smirnov	*p-value* > 0.05	0.200	Residuals are normally distributed
Multicollinearity	*Tolerance* & VIF	*Tolerance* > 0.10; VIF < 10	Tolerance = 0.426; VIF = 2.347	No multicollinearity detected
Heteroskedasticity	Glejser Test	*p-value* > 0.05	$X_1 = 0.193$; $X_2 = 0.416$	No heteroskedasticity detected

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Based on the results of the classical assumption tests, it can be concluded that the regression residuals satisfy the normality assumption, as indicated by probability values exceeding the established significance level. Furthermore, the multicollinearity test results show that there are no strong correlations among the independent variables, as reflected by tolerance and variance inflation factor values that remain within acceptable limits. The heteroskedasticity test results also indicate that the residual variance is homoscedastic, suggesting the absence of heteroskedasticity. Accordingly, the regression model meets the required statistical assumptions and is considered appropriate for analyzing the effects of mental health and work environment on employee performance.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

To assess how mental health and work environment are jointly related to employee performance, a multiple linear regression approach was applied at the Deputy for Small Enterprises, Ministry of MSMEs. In this model, employee performance serves as the dependent variable, while mental health and work environment function as independent variables. The analytical model specification is expressed as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = \hat{\beta}_0 + \hat{\beta}_1 X_1 + \hat{\beta}_2 X_2 \qquad (1)$$

where $\hat{\beta}_0$ represents the constant term, while $\hat{\beta}_1$ and $\hat{\beta}_2$ denote the estimated coefficients for the mental health and work environment variables, respectively.

Model Estimation Results

Table 6 presents the estimation results of the multiple linear regression analysis examining the relationship between mental health, work environment, and employee performance. The estimated regression coefficients indicate that both independent variables are positively associated with employee performance. Specifically, the coefficient of the mental health variable suggests that better psychological well-being among employees is associated with higher levels of performance, assuming other organizational conditions remain constant. Similarly, the coefficient of the work environment variable indicates that more supportive workplace conditions are related to improved employee performance, regardless of changes in employees' mental health levels.

Table 6. Results of the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	*t-value*	$p - value$
Constant	4.614	3.089	1.494	0.139
Mental Health (X_1)	0.432	0.077	5.612	< 0.001

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	*t-value*	$p - value$
Work Environment (X_2)	0.404	0.101	3.999	< 0.001

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Partial and Simultaneous Tests

Based on the statistical test results, both mental health and work environment were found to have significant effects on civil servant performance when analyzed individually. The t-test results indicate that each independent variable makes a significant contribution to explaining variations in employee performance.

Furthermore, the simultaneous test results presented in Table 7 show that the regression model is statistically significant. These findings indicate that mental health and work environment jointly influence employee performance. Accordingly, civil servant performance is shaped not by individual or organizational factors in isolation, but by the combined interaction of employees' psychological conditions and workplace characteristics.

Table 7. Results of Simultaneous Test (ANOVA)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F-value*	$p - value$
Regression	3609.927	2	1804.963	95.616	< 0.001
Residual	1585.682	84	18.877	-	
Total	5195.609	86	-	-	

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Coefficient of Determination

The Adjusted R^2 value of 0.688, as reported in Table 8, indicates that mental health and work environment jointly explain 68.8 percent of the variation in employee performance. This finding suggests that the regression model captures the primary factors influencing civil servant performance within the organizational unit under study. The remaining unexplained variation in performance is associated with other factors beyond the scope of the present research. Accordingly, mental health and work environment can be regarded as important determinants of employee performance at the Deputy for Small Enterprises, Ministry of MSMEs, while other organizational factors such as leadership, performance appraisal systems, competency development, and additional variables not included in the model may warrant further investigation in future studies.

Table 8. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.834	0.695	0.688	4.345

Source: Data Processing, 2025

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

1. Mental health and work environment were found to have positive and significant effects on civil servant performance, both partially and simultaneously. These findings indicate that improvements in employees' mental health conditions and the quality of the work environment directly contribute to enhanced performance outcomes.
2. The coefficient of determination indicates that a substantial proportion of the variation in employee performance can be jointly explained by mental health and work

environment, while the remaining variation is influenced by factors outside the research model. This suggests that civil servant performance is shaped not only by technical competencies and administrative procedures, but also by employees' psychological conditions and the quality of the organizational work environment.

3. The findings underscore the relevance of human resource management approaches that position employee well-being as a strategic factor in public sector organizations. In bureaucratic settings characterized by formal procedures and high accountability demands, the sustainability of performance is highly dependent on the organization's ability to maintain employees' mental health and provide a supportive work environment.
4. The generalization of these research findings should be approached with caution and is primarily applicable to public sector organizational units that share characteristics similar to those of the Deputy for Small Enterprises. This includes units involved in policy formulation and implementation, operating under high administrative demands, clearly defined performance targets, and intensive inter-unit coordination.

Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings of this study, it is recommended that human resource management practices at the Deputy for Small Enterprises, Ministry of MSMEs, more explicitly integrate mental health considerations and work environment quality into organizational policies and daily managerial practices. These efforts may be implemented through the provision of psychological support for employees, the adoption of more balanced workload management, and the cultivation of a work climate that positions employee well-being as an integral component of performance improvement strategies. In addition, continuous enhancement of the work environment, both physical and non-physical, should be pursued through improvements in workplace facilities, the strengthening of harmonious working relationships, and the application of participatory and empathetic leadership styles. From a policy perspective, institutional mechanisms are needed to systematically incorporate mental health considerations into performance management and organizational development systems, such as the development of psychological well-being indicators, regular psychosocial risk assessments, and preventive interventions aimed at reducing work-related stress. Through this approach, civil servant performance is expected to improve sustainably alongside the preservation of employee well-being and the quality of public service delivery.

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