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The Effect of Leadership, Job Training, and Workload on Employee Performance

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Abstract

Employee performance in the retail sector may be influenced by leadership practices, job training, and workload amid challenges related to supervisory support, inconsistent training, and increasing work demands. This study examines the effects of leadership, job training, and workload on employee performance. A quantitative approach with a causal-associative design was employed, involving 63 employees selected through simple random sampling from a population of 165 employees. Data were collected through questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS 4.0. The results show that the model explains 88.0% of the variance in employee performance. Leadership has a positive but insignificant effect on employee performance, while job training also has a positive but insignificant effect. In contrast, workload has a positive and significant effect. Retail managers should prioritize effective and proportional workload management while maintaining supportive leadership and structured training. These findings highlight the importance of a holistic human resource management approach in dynamic retail environments.

Keywords

Employee Performance, Job Training, Leadership, Retail Sectors, Workload.

1. Introduction

Employee performance is a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness, particularly in the retail industry, where employees directly influence service quality, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Maintaining optimal performance is challenging because retail employees must respond to fluctuating customer demand, standardized procedures, and high operational intensity. Various organizational factors, including leadership, job training, and workload, may influence employee performance by shaping employees' ability, motivation, and capacity to complete their responsibilities effectively (Rustiana, 2010; Afandi, 2021; Imam et al., 2023). These challenges are also evident at ADA Setiabudi Supermarket, where preliminary observations indicate concerns about limited supervisory support, inconsistent employee training, and increased workloads during peak operating periods. These conditions highlight the importance of examining these factors to understand better their contribution to employee performance in the retail context.

Leadership represents an important organizational factor because leaders influence employees' motivation, direction, and ability to achieve performance expectations. Effective leadership involves not only communicating operational targets but also providing guidance, support, appreciation, and opportunities for employees to communicate work-related challenges. Previous research by Imam et al. (2023) indicates that supervisor support can strengthen employee engagement and improve performance. However, these leadership functions may not always be optimally implemented in operationally demanding retail environments. At ADA Setiabudi Supermarket, preliminary observations indicate that supervisors tend to emphasize operational targets and task completion, while employees may receive comparatively limited guidance, appreciation, and opportunities for two-way communication. Such conditions may influence employees' motivation and engagement, particularly when they face demanding and rapidly changing operational situations. Therefore, examining leadership in relation to employee performance helps explain how supervisory practices operate within the dynamic self-service retail context.

Furthermore, job training plays an important role in developing employees' knowledge, skills, and work attitudes, enabling them to perform their responsibilities more effectively and professionally (Noe et al., 2020). Previous studies by Salas et al. (2019), Sukoco et al. (2020), Mutiya et al. (2022), and Hidayat et al. (2024) consistently indicate that effective training can improve employee performance, productivity, and work behavior. However, this relationship may depend on the quality and continuity of training implementation. At ADA Setiabudi Supermarket, preliminary observations and interviews indicate that training is not consistently provided, particularly for new employees, who typically receive only one to two days of orientation before learning through direct practice. Some employees experience difficulties in understanding operational procedures, POS systems, product information, and customer service standards, potentially increasing errors and reducing work efficiency. These conditions highlight the importance of examining job training as a factor influencing employee performance in the retail context.

Workload refers to the tasks and responsibilities that employees must complete within a specific timeframe in accordance with their physical and mental capacities (Tarwaka, 2020). In retail environments, fluctuating customer demand can substantially increase workload, particularly during weekends, public holidays, and peak operating hours. At ADA Setiabudi Supermarket, these periods often lack additional staffing, requiring employees to perform multiple tasks simultaneously. Preliminary interviews revealed that employees frequently experienced increased work intensity, with sales staff handling customer service and merchandise arrangement while also assisting with warehouse transfers and loading or unloading

goods. Although excessive workload may cause fatigue, stress, impaired concentration, and reduced performance, an appropriate distribution of tasks and staffing is important to prevent excessive job demands from compromising employees' ability to perform effectively (Afandi, 2021; Widjaja et al., 2024).

Although previous studies have examined leadership, job training, and workload as determinants of employee performance, their findings remain inconsistent across organizational and sectoral contexts. Leadership and job training, for instance, do not necessarily produce significant performance outcomes when employees operate under standardized procedures and high operational autonomy (Suprayitno, 2024; Setyorini & Subarjo, 2025). Meanwhile, workload may generate either positive or negative effects depending on its intensity (Sa'adah et al., 2023; Effendi et al., 2025). This study addresses this gap by examining these three factors within a self-service retail environment, a context characterized by fluctuating customer demand and intensive operational activities. The novelty lies in providing empirical evidence from ADA Setiabudi Supermarket in Semarang and assessing both the individual and collective effects of leadership, job training, and workload on employee performance. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of leadership, job training, and workload on employee performance.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. The Effect of Leadership on Employee Performance

From the perspective of Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), effective leadership should strengthen employees' expectations that effort leads to performance and appropriate rewards. Leadership refers to a leader's ability to influence, direct, and motivate subordinates to work effectively toward organizational goals (Ardilla & Pramusinto, 2015). In this regard, effective leadership can foster a conducive work environment, enhance employee morale, and build harmonious relationships between leaders and employees. Wahyudi et al. (2023) emphasize that leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing employee motivation and performance by providing direction and serving as a driving force within the organization. Similarly, Alvionita and Saputro (2024) explain that leadership involves encouragement and supervision to keep employees' efforts aligned with organizational goals. Susanti et al. (2024) further describe leadership as a process of influencing employee behavior through effective communication, role modeling, and sound decision-making.

Previous studies generally suggest that effective leadership improves employee performance by strengthening work motivation, discipline, and organizational loyalty (Wahyudi et al., 2023; Alvionita & Saputro, 2024). In particular, participative leadership encourages employees to engage in decision-making, thereby enhancing their job satisfaction and performance (Laksmi & Perdhana, 2024). Moreover, Sujoto et al. (2025) found that transformational leadership, combined with favorable job characteristics, can foster greater motivation and responsibility, encouraging employees to become more creative and productive when completing tasks that demand speed and accuracy. These findings collectively indicate that leadership practices can create supportive conditions that facilitate higher levels of employee performance.

H1: Leadership has a significant effect on employee performance.

2.2. The Effect of Job Training on Employee Performance

Job training is a learning process designed to enhance employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities, enabling them to perform their jobs effectively and professionally. Training is a crucial component of human resource development, as it helps employees adapt to advancements in technology, changes in work systems,

and evolving organizational demands. Job training represents a systematic effort by companies to improve employee competence in alignment with job requirements and technological progress (Viterouli et al., 2024; Yertas, 2024). Rahman et al. (2023) state that training plays a strategic role in enhancing both technical and non-technical skills, thereby boosting individual and organizational performance. Meanwhile, Farisi et al. (2024) explain that job training aims to improve work capabilities so that employees can carry out their responsibilities more effectively.

Previous studies by Rahman et al. (2023) indicate that appropriate and continuous job training plays an important role in strengthening employee skills, discipline, and productivity, thereby supporting improved organizational performance. Training provides employees with relevant knowledge, skills, and a clearer understanding of their responsibilities, enabling them to perform tasks more effectively, efficiently, and consistently (Wulansari & Mathori, 2026). Furthermore, Yimam (2022) emphasizes that employee training should be implemented as a continuous, planned, and systematic process aligned with the organization's strategic mission, goals, and objectives. Training programs should also consider the specific needs identified through individual, job, and organizational analyses to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.

H2: Job training has a significant effect on employee performance.

2.3. The Effect of Workload on Employee Performance

Workload refers to the set of tasks and responsibilities an employee must complete within a specific timeframe, commensurate with their physical and mental capabilities. Excessive workload can lead to pressure, stress, and fatigue, thereby negatively impacting employee productivity and work quality. According to Wahyudi et al. (2023), workload represents the volume of tasks an employee must complete based on responsibilities assigned by the organization. Sa'adah et al. (2023) explain that excessive workload can cause fatigue and reduce employee performance. Meanwhile, Ayu et al. (2024) state that workload relates to physical and mental job demands that influence employee productivity levels. In retail environments, workloads often increase during peak hours or surges in customer volume, requiring balanced work management to ensure employees can continue to perform optimally.

Previous research highlights the importance of workload in shaping employee performance. Excessive or disproportionate workloads may reduce service quality, concentration, and work motivation, potentially hindering employees' ability to perform effectively (Sa'adah et al., 2023; Wahyudi et al., 2023). However, workload does not always produce negative outcomes. Under manageable conditions, increased task demands may stimulate employees' competitive spirit, adaptability, and responsiveness, thereby supporting better performance. Effendi et al. (2025) further found that higher workloads can enhance productivity through improved time management, stronger task focus, and greater motivation to complete responsibilities efficiently. Thus, the effect of workload may depend on how employees perceive and manage the demands placed upon them.

H3: Workload has a significant effect on employee performance.

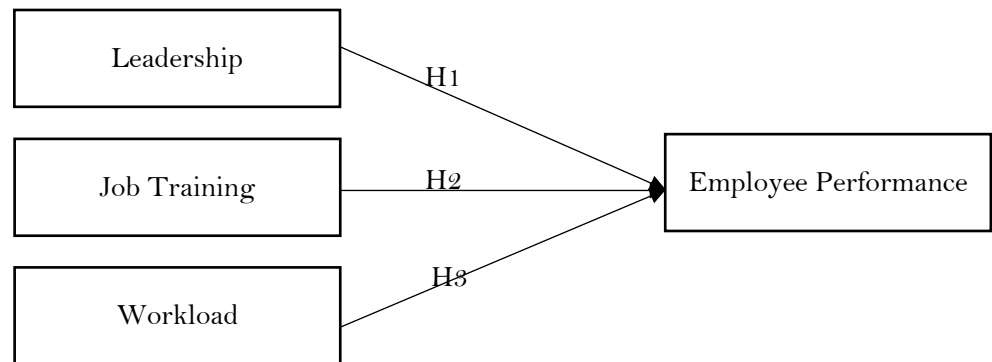


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating the relationships between leadership, job training, workload, and employee performance. The framework proposes three direct hypotheses: H1 examines the effect of leadership on employee performance, H2 examines the effect of job training on employee performance, and H3 examines the effect of workload on employee performance.

3. Methods

This study employs a quantitative approach with a causal-associative research design. The quantitative approach was selected because the study aims to statistically examine relationships and effects between variables of analyzing numerical data. This research analyzes the effects of leadership, job training, and workload on employee performance at ADA Setiabudi Supermarket, Semarang. This study uses a causal-associative approach to determine the effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

The population for this study consists of all 165 employees of ADA Setiabudi Supermarket in Semarang. This population was selected because all employees are directly involved in the company's operational activities and are considered knowledgeable about leadership conditions, job training, workload, and workplace performance. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a 10% margin of error, resulting in a sample of 63 respondents. The study employed a probability sampling technique, specifically simple random sampling, ensuring that every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected as a respondent. This technique was chosen to ensure that the resulting sample objectively represents the characteristics of the population.

This study used a questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed based on indicators for each research variable: leadership, job training, workload, and employee performance. The questionnaire was distributed directly to employees of ADA Setiabudi Supermarket Semarang. In addition to primary data obtained via questionnaires, this study utilized secondary data, sourced from company documents, scientific journals, books, and relevant prior research, to support the theoretical framework and the discussion of the findings.

Variable measurement in this study employed a five-point Likert scale to assess respondents' perceptions regarding each statement presented. The Likert scale was selected because it systematically measures respondents' attitudes, perceptions, and opinions about the social phenomenon under investigation. Response scores ranged from strongly disagree (1) and disagree (2) to neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The analysis comprised evaluation of the measurement model through outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE),

Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability, followed by assessment of the structural model using R-square, F-square, and bootstrapping to test the proposed hypotheses based on path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values.

4. Results

The instruments used in this study underwent validity and reliability testing based on a sample from ADA Setiabudi Supermarket in Semarang; the results of this analysis served as a basis for data collection for further analysis. The study examines the impact of leadership, job training, and workload on employee performance using SmartPLS 4.0, as shown in Figure 2.

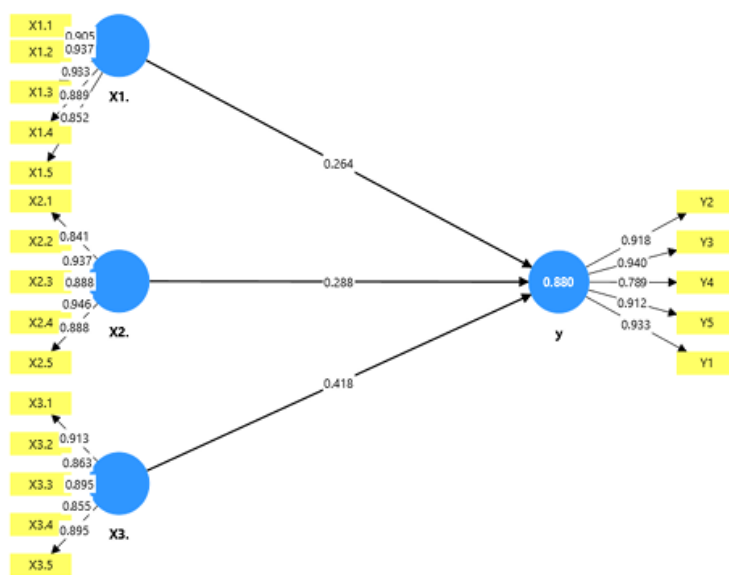


Figure 2. PLS Model Schematic

The final outer model evaluation in this study resulted in the leadership variable being reflected by 5 indicators, job training by 5 indicators, workload by 5 indicators, and employee performance by 5 indicators. The SmartPLS analysis evaluates the reflective outer model using three criteria: Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE for each variable.

Table 1. Outer Loadings

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loadings	Description
Leadership	X1.1	0.905	Valid
	X1.2	0.937	
	X1.3	0.933	
	X1.4	0.889	
	X1.5	0.852	
Job Training	X2.1	0.841	Valid
	X2.2	0.937	
	X2.3	0.888	
	X2.4	0.946	
	X2.5	0.888	
Workload	X3.1	0.913	Valid
	X3.2	0.863	
	X3.3	0.895	
	X3.4	0.855	
	X3.5	0.895	

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loadings	Description
Employee Performance	X3.5	0.895	Valid
	Y1	0.918	
	Y2	0.940	
	Y3	0.789	
	Y4	0.912	
	Y5	0.933	

The results of the outer model assessment using SmartPLS are presented in Table 1. All indicators across the four constructs have outer loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating adequate convergent validity. The leadership construct shows loading values ranging from 0.852 to 0.937, with X1.2 having the highest loading. For job training, loadings range from 0.841 to 0.946, with X2.4 showing the strongest contribution. The workload indicators exhibit loadings between 0.855 and 0.913, while employee performance ranges from 0.789 to 0.940. The lowest value is observed for Y3 (0.789), which nevertheless exceeds the minimum criterion. The results confirm that all indicators adequately represent their respective constructs and are therefore retained for subsequent analysis.

Table 2. AVE Results

Variable	AVE
Leadership	0.816
Job Training	0.811
Workload	0.782
Employee Performance	0.811

Based on the results presented in Table 2, all constructs have AVE values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that the measurement model demonstrates adequate convergent validity. The leadership construct has an AVE value of 0.816, indicating that the construct explains 81.6% of the variance in its indicators. Job training has an AVE value of 0.811, while workload has an AVE value of 0.782. Meanwhile, employee performance records an AVE value of 0.811. These results demonstrate that each construct explains more than half of the variance in its respective indicators. Therefore, all constructs meet the required criterion for convergent validity and can be retained for further analysis.

Table 3. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Leadership	0.944	0.957
Job Training	0.941	0.955
Workload	0.930	0.947
Employee Performance	0.941	0.955

Table 3 presents the reliability assessment based on composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. All constructs exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70 for both measures. Composite reliability values range from 0.947 for workload to 0.957 for leadership, while job training and employee performance each record a value of 0.955. Similarly, Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.930 for workload to 0.944 for leadership, with job training and employee performance both recording 0.941. These results demonstrate a high level of internal consistency across all constructs. Therefore, the indicators used to measure leadership, job training, workload, and employee performance are sufficiently reliable and suitable for subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination

Test	Value
R-Square	0.880
R-Square Adjusted	0.874

Based on Table 4, the R-Square indicates the magnitude of the influence of leadership, training, and workload on employee performance, with a value of 0.880. This indicates that leadership, training, and workload variables explain 88.0% of the variation in employee performance, while other variables outside the scope of this study explain the remaining 12.0%. Meanwhile, the Adjusted R-Square value of 0.874 indicates that, after adjustment for the number of predictors in the model, the explanatory power remains high at 87.4%.

Table 5. F-Square Test

Variable	F-Square
Leadership → Employee Performance	0.078
Job Training → Employee Performance	0.074
Workload → Employee Performance	0.247

Table 5 presents the F-square values, which indicate the effect size of each predictor variable on employee performance. The results show that leadership has an F-square value of 0.078, indicating a weak effect on employee performance. Training also has a weak effect, with an f-square value of 0.074. In contrast, workload has an f-square value of 0.247, indicating a moderate effect on employee performance. These findings indicate that workload has the strongest effect size among the variables examined, followed by leadership and training.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test Results via Path Coefficients

Variable	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Statistics	P-Value
Leadership → Employee Performance	0.264	0.266	0.162	1.630	0.103
Job Training → Performance	0.288	0.279	0.155	1.862	0.063
Workload → Performance	0.418	0.422	0.096	4.372	0.000

Based on the hypothesis testing results presented in Table 6, leadership has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on employee performance. The path coefficient is 0.264, indicating a positive relationship; however, the t-statistic of 1.630 is below the critical value of 1.96, with a p-value of 0.103 (>0.05). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is rejected. Similarly, job training shows a positive coefficient of 0.288 but does not significantly influence employee performance. The obtained t-statistic of 1.862 and p-value of 0.063 (>0.05) indicate that the effect does not meet the required significance level. Thus, Hypothesis 2 is also rejected.

In contrast, workload demonstrates a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.418. The t-statistic of 4.372 exceeds the critical value of 1.96, while the p-value of 0.000 is below 0.05. This finding indicates that higher workload is associated with higher employee performance in the context of this study. Accordingly, Hypothesis 3 is supported. The findings suggest that workload is the only predictor among the three examined variables that has a statistically significant direct effect on employee performance.

5. Discussion

The findings indicate that leadership does not significantly affect employee performance at ADA Setiabudi Supermarket, Semarang. From the perspective of Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), effective leadership should strengthen employees' expectations that effort leads to performance and appropriate rewards. However, this result is consistent with Suprayitno (2024), who also found no significant effect of leadership on employee performance. In the self-service retail context, standardized procedures, routine tasks, intensive customer interactions, and fast-paced operations may reduce employees' dependence on managerial direction, making leadership less influential in determining immediate performance. This finding contrasts with Sutrisno (2022) and Astriana et al. (2024), who reported significant positive effects of leadership in manufacturing and public-sector settings. The difference may reflect contextual characteristics, as retail employees tend to rely more heavily on established SOPs and operational routines, particularly amid fluctuating customer volumes and extended operating hours. Thus, leadership may have a less direct role in shaping performance in this setting.

The results indicate that job training does not significantly affect employee performance, resulting in the rejection of H2. According to Becker's (1964) Human Capital Theory, training represents a long-term investment that enhances productivity by developing employees' specific skills, technical knowledge, and professional attitudes. However, this finding aligns with Setyorini and Subarjo (2025), who found that training may not significantly improve performance when implementation is suboptimal, insufficiently aligned with job requirements, or lacks appropriate follow-up. In the supermarket context, training at ADA Setiabudi may be general and sporadic, such as brief orientations or customer-service sessions, making knowledge difficult to apply consistently amid intensive operational demands and peak-hour pressures. This result differs from Farisi et al. (2024) and Laksmi and Perdhana (2024), who reported significant positive effects. The difference may arise from limited training continuity, employee turnover, and insufficient specialized training for digitized retail operations.

The hypothesis testing results indicate that workload has a positive and significant effect on employee performance; therefore, H3 is accepted. Yerkes and Dodson (1908) explain this relationship through an inverted-U pattern, suggesting that an optimal workload can enhance focus, efficiency, and performance before excessive demands cause fatigue and decline. In the supermarket context, increased customer volumes during peak hours may create manageable task demands that encourage employees to work faster, maintain accuracy, and adapt while handling cashier duties, shelf stocking, and customer complaints.

This finding is consistent with Witari and Ayuni (2023) and Astriana et al. (2024), who found that workload positively affects performance in service-sector settings. Field observations at ADA Setiabudi further indicate that peak-hour workloads stimulate employees' competitive spirit and adaptability. Thus, proportional workload distribution and strategic task rotation are important for maintaining motivation, productivity, and service quality without creating excessive fatigue. These findings imply that ADA Setiabudi Supermarket should prioritize proportional workload distribution and strategic task rotation to maintain employee performance, particularly during peak operating hours. Although leadership and training were not significant predictors, supportive supervision and continuous, job-specific training should still be maintained to strengthen employees' capabilities and operational consistency.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings, workload has the strongest positive effect on employee performance, indicating that appropriately managed and challenging task demands can encourage employees to maintain productivity, focus, and adaptability. In contrast, leadership and job training do not have significant partial effects, which may reflect the characteristics of the self-service retail environment, where employees rely heavily on established procedures, operational routines, and autonomy in performing their tasks. These findings suggest that improving employee performance requires an integrated human resource management approach rather than relying on a single factor. In practice, retail management should prioritize proportional workload allocation while maintaining supportive leadership and continuous training to sustain performance in dynamic operating conditions.

This study has several limitations. It was conducted within a single organizational context, namely ADA Setiabudi Supermarket, Semarang, with a relatively small sample of 63 employees from a population of 165, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the study examined only three independent variables and relied on self-reported questionnaire data, which may introduce response bias. Future research should involve multiple supermarkets or retail organizations across different regions to strengthen the generalizability and enable contextual comparisons. Further studies should also include variables such as motivation, organizational support, job satisfaction, employee engagement, or other psychological factors to explain better the insignificant partial effects of leadership and job training. Longitudinal or mixed-method approaches are also encouraged to capture changes in employee performance across different operational conditions and provide deeper contextual explanations.

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